HE'S MUCH TO BLAME,

A COMEDY;

IN FIVE ACTS.

AS PERFORMED AT THE THEATRE ROYAL, COVENT GARDEN.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE author of He's much to Blame is in some small degree indebted to Le Complaisant, a comedy attributed to Monsieur De Ferriol Pont-de-Veyle, and to the tragedy of Clavigo by Goethe.

PROLOGUE.

PROLOGUES, in theſe ſagacious days, muſt not
Repeat the ſtory; and betray the plot:
For deep laid plots we ſometimes have, no doubt
'Tis pity you can't always find them out:
The ſecret muſt be kept; and not be told:
In this, at leaſt, we beat the bards of old:
We can't endure our meaning you ſhould gueſs,
And here again we boaſt complete ſucceſs:
Cautious leſt you the myſtery ſhould diſcover,
We keep you in the dark—till all is over.

Since theſe important points we muſt not name,
The title let's diſcuſs: He's much to blame!
To blame? Ay, ſurely; very much! But who?
The author. Well, that's nothing very new.
And what does blame induce? Why puniſhment.
Raſhly we ſin and leiſurely repent.

Lured by that tempting bait a nine nights' bonus,
Theſe ſcribbling ſinners multiply upon us!
Then prologues write; to whine, cajole, and tickle:
Begging you'll burn the rod you've laid in pickle.
Shielding himſelf by theſe and ſuch like arts,
He hopes to hurl with ſurer aim his darts.
But ſtrike and cry, when we receive a blow,
Is arrant cowardice! I told him ſo.
He's mad, who would the field of battle tread;
Unleſs he hoped to have a broken head.
There's honor in ſuch ſcars—he'll win and wear it;
Then give him honor plenty! Never ſpare it.
But, ſhould it be your pleaſure not to quarrel,
He'll very kindly bear his load of laurel.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Lord Vibrate,	Mr. Quick.
Sir George Verſatile,	Mr. Lewis.
Mr. Delaval,	Mr. Pope.
Dr. Goſterman,	Mr. Murray.
Thompſon,	Mr. Davenport.
Williams,	Mr. Clarke.
Harry,	Mr. Abbot.
Maſter of the Hotel,	Mr. Thompſon.
Jenkins,	Mr. Rees.
Waiter,	Mr. Blurton.
Footman,	Mr. Curtis.
Lady Vibrate,	Mrs. Mattocks.
Lady Jane,	Miſs Betterton.
Maria,	Mrs. Pope.
Lucy,	Mrs. Gibbs.
Lady Jane's woman,	Mrs. Norton.

HE'S MUCH TO BLAME,

A COMEDY.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Ringing heard. The hall of a hotel, with a ſpacious ſtair-caſe.*

Enter the MASTER *and* HEAD WAITER *meeting.*

MASTER.

WHY where are all the fellows, Jenkins? Don't you hear the bell No. 9?

JENK. Tom is gone up to anſwer it, ſir.

MAS. Who occupies that apartment?

JENK. The handſome youth and girl, that arrived late laſt night.

MAS. Juſt as I was going to bed?

JENK. Yes, ſir.

MAS. He is quite a boy.

JENK. Razor has never robbed him of a hair.

MAS. Some ſtripling, perhaps, that has run away with his mother's maid.

JENK. They ordered ſeparate beds.

MAS. Well, ſee what they want.

JENK. Yes, ſir.

MAS. And, harkye, be attentive the moment you hear Lord and Lady Vibrate, or their daughter, ſtirring.

ſtirring. People of quality muſt never be neglected.

JENK. Oh, no, ſir—Here is Dr. Goſterman.

[*Exit.*

SCENE II. *Enter the* DOCTOR.

MAS. Good morrow, Doctor.

DR. Coot morgen, my tear friend. Is de Fiprate family fiſible to ſee?

MAS. Not yet.

DR. My lordtſhip und my latyſhip vas ſharge me to be mit dem betime.

MAS. You are a great favourite there, Doctor.

DR. Ya, ſair. Dat I am efery vhere.

MAS. You act in a double capacity: phyſician, and privy counſellor.

DR. Und I am as better in de von as in de oder.

MAS. Why ay, Doctor, you have a ſmooth pleaſant manner.

DR. Ya, ſair. Dat is my vay. I mix de ſyrup mit all my preſcription.

MAS. Ay, ay, you are a uſeful perſon.

DR. Ya, ſair. Dat is my vay. I leave Yarmany und I com at Englandt mit little money, und great cunning in de art, und de ſcience. I ſhall af de eſſence, und de cream, und de balſam, und de ſyrup, und de electric, und de magnetic, und de mineral, und de vegetable, und de air, und de earſe, und de ſea, und all dat vas ſubject under my command. So I make de nation beneſit, und myſelf riſh. Dat is my vay.

MAS. Yes; you can tickle the guineas into your pocket.

DR. Ya, ſair. Dat is my vay.

MAS. You have had many patients?

DR.

Dr. Ya, ſair. I af cure touſand und touſand! Dat is my vay.

Mas. And how many have you killed, Doctor?

Dr. Der Teufel, ſair! Kill? Ven my patient vas die, dat vas Nature dat vas kill. Ven dey vas cure, dat vas Dr. Von Goſtermans. Dat is my vay. No, ſair! Dr. Von Goſtermans vas kill himſelf, dat oder people may live.

Mas. How do you mean kill yourſelf, Doctor?

Dr. Der Teufel, ſair! Vas I not be call here? Vas I not be call dere? Vas I not be call efery vhere? I af hundert und touſand patient dat die efery day, till I vas com. So I vas drive to de city; und dere I vas meet my beſten friend, de gout, de apoplexy, und de aſthmatica: und den I vas drive to de inn of court, und de lawyer; und dere I vas find more of my beſten friend; de hydropica, de rheumatica, und de paralytica.

Mas. What, Doctor! The lawyers and inns of court paralytic?

Dr. Ya, ſair.

Mas. I wiſh they were, with all my ſoul!

Dr. Und den I vas drive und make my reverence mit de lordt, und mit de duke, und mit de grandee; und dere I vas meet moſh oder of my beſten friend; de hypochondrica, de ſpaſmodica, de hyſterica, de maraſma, de morbid affection, de tremor, und de miſt before de eye.

Mas. Morbid affections, tremors, and miſts before the eyes, the diſeaſes of the great?

Dr. Ya, ſair. Und dey vas grow vorſe und vorſe efery day.

Mas. Well, well, they have choſen a ſkilful doctor!

Dr. Ya, ſair. I ſhall do all deir buſineſs, efery von.

von. Dat is my vay. I ſhall af de eſſence, und de cream, und de balſam, und de ſyrup, und de electric, und de magnetic, und de mineral, und de vegetable, und de air, und de earſe, und de ſea, und all dat vas ſubject under my command. Dat is my vay. Bote dat is as noting at all. Ah ſa, my liebſte: you vas my beſten friend. You make me acquaint myſelf mit all de patient dat vas come to your houſe; and ſo I vas your beſten friend, und I vas gif de phyſic for yourſelf, und de phyſic for your ſhile, und de phyſic for your vife.

MAS. For which my wife will never more thank you, Doctor.

DR. No: your vife vas die, und you vas tank me yourſelf. So now you tell me: Af you any new cuſtomer dat vas com?

MAS. Yes: a youth, and a girl that looks like a waiting maid, arrived late laſt night.

DR. Vhich it vas a perſon of grandeur?

MAS. Oh no; wholly unattended.

DR. Ah ah! Vhich it vas a lofing couple, den?

MAS. It ſeems not.

DR. A poy und a vaiting vomans! Dere ſhall be ſometing myſtery in dat.

MAS. So I think. Here comes the girl.

DR. Ah ah! Let me do: I ſhall talk to her. I ſhall begin by make acquaintance mit her.

SCENE III. *Enter* LUCY *down the ſtaircaſe.*

LU. Pray, ſir, deſire the waiter to make haſte with breakfaſt.

MAS. Here, Jenkins! Breakfaſt to No. 9! Be quick!

JENK. *(Without)* Yes, ſir.

MAS.

Mas. Tea or coffee, madam?

Lu. Tea.

Dr. How you do, my tear? You vas pretty young frau: fery pretty girl, my tear. Perhaps you vas ſtranger, my tear?

Lu. Perhaps I am.

Dr. Ah! Vat is your name, my tear?

Lu. That which my Godmother gave me.

Dr. Your maſtair af made de long yourney, my tear.

Lu. Has he?

Dr. From vat country you com, my tear?

Lu. Hem!

Dr. I aſk, from vat country you com, my tear.

Lu. Aſk again.

Dr. From de town of —— Ha!

Lu. Ay. How do you call it?

Dr. Dat is vat I vant you ſhall tell?

Lu. I ſee you do.

Dr. Your maſtair is fery young, my tear.

Lu. Thank you, ſir.

Dr. For vat you tank me?

Lu. For your news.

Dr. Ah, ah! You are fery vitty und pretty, my tear.

Lu. More news. Thank you again.

Dr. Vat vas you call de young yentleman's name?

Lu. I will aſk, and ſend you word.

Dr. How long ſhall he be ſtay in town?

Lu. Till he goes into the country.

Dr. Vat is your capacity, my tear?

Lu. Like yours, little enough.

Dr. You not underſtandt me, my tear. Vat is your poſt, your office?

Lu. To anſwer rude queſtions.

Dr. Your maſtair is man of family?

Lu. Yes. He had a father, and mother, and uncles, and aunts.

Dr. Und tey vas tead?

Lu. I am not a tombſtone.

Dr. Com, com, my tear, let you make me anſwer.

Lu. Anan?

Enter Waiter.

Wait. Here is the breakfaſt, madam.

Lu. Take it up ſtairs.

[*Exeunt Lucy and Waiter up the ſtaircaſe.*

Dr. Der Teufel! A cunning yipſey! She has make me raiſe my curioſity. *(Calls.)* My tear! My tear! Com pack, my tear! *(Lucy returns.)* Do my compliment to your maſtair, und I ſhall make me moſh happy if I ſhall af de honeur to make me acquaintance mit him. My name is call Dr. Von Goſtermans. I ſhall af de eſſence, und de cream, und de balſam, und de ſyrup, und de electric, und de magnetic, und de mineral, und de vegetable, und de air, und de earſe, und de ſea, und all dat vas ſubject under my command. I ſhall af de beſt recommendation for de honeſt Docteur dat vas poſſible. My Lordt und my Laty Fiprate vas my beſten friend. I vas practice mit all de piggeſt family in de uniferſe. Docteur Von Goſtermans vas know efery poty; und efery poty vas know Docteur Von Goſtermans. You tell him dat, my tear.

Lu. Tell him that? I cannot remember half of it! Are you, ſir, acquainted with Lord Vibrate's family?

Dr.

DR. Ya, my tear. I vas make friendſhip mit dem more as many year.

LU. And do you know where they are?

MAS. To be ſure he does. They are in this—

DR. *(Aſide to Maſter.)* Huſh! Silence your tongue! Dere is ſometing myſtery. *(Aloud.)* If you ſhall make me introduce to your maſtair, my tear, I ſhall tell him efery ting und more as dat, my tear. Vill you, my tear?

LU. I will go and enquire.

DR. Tank you, my tear. You are fery pretty girl, my tear: fery yitty pretty—Ah! You are ſo ſly cunning little yipſey, my tear. Ah ah! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

A chamber. MARIA *in man's clothes with a letter in her hand and walking with anxiety. The Waiter enters and leaves the breakfaſt. She then reads.*

MAR. "Dear ſiſter, The letter I now write is almoſt needleſs, for I ſhall leave Italy and follow it immediately; having at laſt obtained intelligence of your faithleſs lover. I am ſorry to inform you that, in addition to your unpardonable wrongs, I have my own to vindicate. But I have threatened too long. You have heard of the Earl of Vibrate. He and his family are by this arrived in England; your betrayer accompanies them, and I am in cloſe purſuit. PAUL DELAVAL."

In what will this end? Muſt they meet? Muſt they fight? Muſt one or both of them fall? Oh horror! Shall I be the cauſe of murder? And whoſe blood is to be ſpilled? That of the moſt generous of brothers, or of the man on whom my firſt and laſt affections have been fixed! Is there no ſafety; no means?

SCENE V. *Enter* LUCY.

LU. Why look here now, madam, you are letting the breakfaſt grow cold! You have been reading that letter again. I do believe I ſhall never get you to eat any more. Come now, pray do take ſome of this French roll; and I'll pour out the tea. Do! Pray do! Pray do!

MAR. I cannot eat, Lucy: I am eaten. Terror and deſpair are devouring me.

LU. Dear! Dear! What will all this come to? Did not you promiſe me that, as ſoon as you had got ſafe to London in your diſguiſe, you would be better?

MAR. Can it be? My kind, my gentle, my true hearted George!

LU. True hearted! No no, madam, he was never true hearted: or he could not ſo ſoon have changed, becauſe his ill fortune changed to good. Every body knows true love never changes.

MAR. What have I done? How have I offended? His careſſes, his proteſtations, his tender endearments! Is then the man in whom my ſoul was wrapt a vil—Oh!

LU. I declare, madam, if you take on this way, you will break my heart as well as your own. Beſide, you forget all the while what you put on this dreſs and came up to London for.

MAR. Oh no. It was if poſſible to prevent miſchief! Murder!——They have never met. They do not know each other. But how ſhall I diſcover Sir George? Of whom ſhall I enquire?

LU. If you would but eat your breakfaſt, I do think I could put you in the way.

MAR. You?

LU.

Lu. Yes.

Mar. By what means?

Lu. Will you eat your breakfaſt, then?

Mar. I cannot eat. Speak.

Lu. Why I have juſt been talking to an outlandiſh comical Doctor, that ſays he is acquainted with Lord Vibrate.

Mar. Indeed! Where is this Doctor?

Lu. He is waiting without: for I knew you would wiſh to ſpeak to him.

Mar. Shew him in immediately.

Lu. I'll tell him you are not well; which is but too true; though you muſt remember, madam, you are a man. So dry your eyes, forget your misfortunes, and, there, cock your hat, a that faſhion, and try to ſwagger a little; or you will be found out. You ſtand ſo like a ſtatue, and look ſo pitiful! Lord, that's not the way! If you are timorſome, and ſilent, and baſhful, nobody on earth will take you for a youth of fortune and faſhion.

[*Exit.*

Mar. (*In revery.*) If they ſhould meet! Heavens! They muſt not.

SCENE VI. *Re-enter* Lucy *and* Doctor.

Lu. My maſter is not very well: he eats neither breakfaſt, dinner nor ſupper, and gets no ſleep.

Dr. He noder eat, noder drink, noder ſleep! Dat is pad! Fery pad! But dat it as noting at all, my tear. Let me do. You ſhall ſee preſently py and py vat is my vay.

Mar. Your ſervant, ſir.

Dr. Sair, I vas your moſh obliſhe fery omple ſairfant, ſair. My name is call Dr. Von Goſtermans.

mans. I ſhall af de beſt recommendation for de honeſt Docteur dat vas poſſible. I vas practice mit all de piggeſt family in de uniferſe. Docteur Von Goſtermans is know efery pody; und efery pody is know Dr. Von Goſtermans. De pretty coquine yung frau tell me dat you not fery fell. You not eat, you not drink, you not ſleep. Dat is pad! Fery pad! Bote dat is as noting at all. You tell me de diagnoſtic und de prognoſtic of all vat you vill ail; und I ſhall make you preſcripe for de anodyne, oder de epipaſtic, oder de balſamic, oder de narcotic, oder de diaphoretic, oder de expectoratic, oder de reſtoratif, oder de emulſif, oder de inciſif; vhich is efery ting ſo ſhveet und ſo delectable as all vat is poſſible.

MAR. Your pardon, ſir, but I wiſh to ſee you on buſineſs of another nature.

DR. Ah ah! Someting of de prifate affair! Dat is coot. I ſhall be as better for dat as for de oder. I vas know de vorl. I vas know efery pody; und efery pody vas know me. Dat is my vay.

MAR. Perhaps then you happen to know Sir George Verſatile?

DR. Oh, Der Teufel, ſair! Ya, ya. Sair Shorge is my beſten friend. Vhich it vas ſix month dat he vas ſucceed to his title und eſtate; und den I vas make acquaintance mit him: dat is my vay.

MAR. But he has been abroad ſince.

DR. Ya, ſair. Ven he vas poor, he vas fall in lofe mit fery pretty yung frau. Bote ſo ſoon as he vas pecome riſh paronet dat vas anoder ting! So his

his relation und his friend vas ſent him to make de Gran tour.

MAR. And he was eaſily perſuaded.

DR. Ya, ſair. He vas vat you call fery coot nature: he vas alvay comply.

MAR. Compliance with him is more than a weakneſs: I fear it is a vice.

DR. So he vas make acquaintance mit Lordt und mit Laty Fiprate: und den he vas tink no more of de pretty yung frau, pecauſe he vas fall in lofe mit anoder.

MAR. Sir! Another! What other?

DR. Vat you ſhall ail, ſair? You ſhange coleur.

MAR. With whom has he fallen in love?

DR. Mit de taughter of Lordt Fiprate.

MAR. With Lady Jane?

DR. Ya, ſair: mit Laty Shane—My cot, ſair! vat you ſhall ail? You not make fall in lofe yourſelf mit Laty Shane?

MAR. No, no—They are no doubt to be married.

DR. My Cot, ſair! you ſo pale as deaths—My Cot, you ſhall faint!

LU. Faint, indeed! (*Aſide*) Bear up, madam. (*Aloud*) My maſter is too much of a man to faint. (*Aſide*) I'll run for a glaſs of water. [*Exit.*

SCENE VII.

MAR. The charming Lady Jane—Where is ſhe?

DR. My Lordt und my Laty Fiprate und my Laty Shane vas all in de houſe here.

MAR. In this houſe?

DR. Ya, ſair.

MAR. And is Sir George here, too?

DR.

Dr. He is com und go alvay ſometime efery tay.

Mar. Are they to be married?

Dr. My Cot, ſair! you af de ague fit.

Mar. Are they to be married?

Dr. My Laty Fiprate vas moſh incline to Sair Shorge; und my Lordt vas ſometime moſh incline too; und den he vas ſometime not moſh incline; und den he vas doubt; und den he vas do me de honeur to conſultate mit me.

Mar. And what is your advice?

Dr. My Lordt Fiprate vas my beſten friends, und I vas adfice dat he ſhall do all as vat he pleaſe: und Sair Shorge vas my beſten friends too, und I vas adfice dat he ſhall do all as vat he pleaſe: und my Laty Fiprate vas petter as my beſten friends, und den I vas more adfice dat ſhe ſhall do all as vat ſhe pleaſe.

Mar. But Lady Jane had another lover?

Dr. Ya, ſair. Mr. Delafal vas make loſe mit her. He vas com from de Eaſt Indie, und he vas loſe her fery moſh; und ſhe vas go mit de family to Italy, und my Laty Fiprate vas make acquaintance mit Sair Shorge, pecauſe he vas ſo moſh pleaſant und coot humeur, und he ſay all as vat ſhe ſay: vhich vas de vay to alvay make agréable.

Mar. Could you do me the favor to introduce me to Lady Jane?

Dr. Ya, ſair. I ſhall do all as vat ſhall make agréable. Dat is my vay.

SCENE VIII. *Re-enter* Lucy *haſtily.*

Lu. (*Aſide to her miſtreſs.*) Oh, madam, don't be terrified, but I declare I have ſpilled almoſt all the water!

Mar.

MAR. (*Alarmed*) What is the matter?

LU. He is come!

MAR. Who? Sir George?

LU. No: don't be frightened: Mr. Delaval, from abroad.

MAR. My brother! Heavens! Did he ſee you?

LU. No. I had a glimpſe of him, and whiſked away juſt as he ſtepped out of the poſtchaiſe.

MAR. Should he meet me in this diſguiſe, what will he ſay?

LU. Send away the Doctor, and let us lock ourſelves up.

MAR. (*To the Doctor*) I muſt beg you will excuſe me, ſir; but it is neceſſary at preſent I ſhould be alone. With your permiſſion, I will ſee you again in the afternoon; and, in the mean time— (*Gives money*)

DR. Oh, ſair! I vas your moſh obliſhe fery omple ſairfant, ſair. I ſhall make you moſh more fiſit; und den you ſhall tell me de diagnoſtic und de prognoſtic of all vat you vill ail.

LU. Yes yes, another time.

DR. Und I ſhall af de eſſence, und de cream, und de balſam, und de ſyrup, und de electric, und de magnetic, und de mineral, und de vegetable, und de air, und de earſe, und de ſea, und all dat vas ſubject under my command.

LU. You have told us all that before.

DR. Und I ſhall make you preſcripe for de anodyne, oder de epipaſtic, oder de balſamic, oder de ſoporific, oder de narcotic, oder de diaphoretic, oder de expectoratic, oder de reſtoratif, oder de emulſif, oder de inciſif, vhich is efery ting ſo ſhveet und del ctable as all vat is poſſible.

LU. *(Aſide)* Was ever any thing ſo provoking? —Pray, ſir, make haſte.

DR. You ſhall make remembrance of Dr. Von Goſtermans. I am practice mit all de piggeſt family in de uniferſe. Sair, I vas your moſh obliſhe fery omple ſairfant, ſair. *(The Doctor goes off talking, and Lucy locks the door while the ſcene changes.)*

SCENE IX. *The hall of the hotel.*

DELAVAL, WILLIAMS, MASTER *and* JENKINS.

DEL. Is the portmanteau ſafe?

WILL. Yes, ſir.

DEL. And the trunks?

WILL. All right.

DEL. Have you paid the poſtillions?

WILL. Yes, ſir.

MASTER. *(To Delaval)* This way if you pleaſe, ſir. Jenkins!

JENK. Coming, ſir.

MAS. Shew the damaſk room. What will you pleaſe to have for breakfaſt, ſir?

DEL. Nothing.

MAS. Sir!

DEL. Any thing.

MAS. Bring tea, coffee, and new laid eggs.

JENK. In a minute, ſir.

DEL. *(To Williams)* Obſerve the directions I gave you. Enquire, immediately, and find if the Vibrate family be in town?

WILL. I will be careful, ſir.—Hay?—*(To Delaval going)*—Sir! Sir!

DEL. Well?

WILL. Look! Here comes Lord Vibrate's ſecretary!

SCENE

SCENE X. *Enter* THOMPSON.

DEL. *(To Thompſon)* Mr. Thompſon!

THOM. Ah! Mr. Delaval? I am heartily glad to ſee you in England!

DEL. Thank you, my good friend. But how is this? Where is the family? Where is Lady Jane?

THOM. I thought that would be your queſtion! They are all in this houſe.

DEL. Indeed!

THOM. I knew, when Lady Jane left Italy, your ſtay there would be ſhort.

DEL. Ay, ay! The follies and frenzies of the madman are viſible to all eyes, except his own.

THOM. I ſee you are diſſatisfied.

DEL. Tortured, till my thoughts and temper are ſo changed that I am almoſt as odious to myſelf as the world is become hateful to me.

THOM. I own, you have ſome cauſe.

DEL. Would *my* injuries were all! But there are other and ſtill deeper ſtabs. It is not yet ten months ſince I returned from India: my heart how light, my eye how cheerful, and my hand prompt at any commendable act. I could then be moved to joy, and ſorrow, and every ſympathiſing paſſion. Smiles and mock courteſy paſſed current on me, the word of man and woman was taken on truſt, and I lived in the ſunſhine of an open unſuſpecting ſoul. But I am now otherwiſe taught. I am changed. My better part is brutalized; and the wrongs that lie rankling here have ſtripped me of human affections, and made me almoſt ſavage.

THOM. What can be ſaid? Patience is the—

DEL. Talk not of patience: I muſt act. I

may then perhaps enquire whether I have acted rightly? But I muſt firſt ſee Lady Jane, and Lord Vibrate.

THOM. Shall I inform his lordſhip of your arrival?

DEL. By no means. Having injured, he may wiſh not to ſee me: and I would not afford him time to invent excuſes, and avoid giving me a hearing. Though my wrongs muſt be endured, they ſhall be told.

THOM. I own, they are great.

DEL. Thoſe that you know are heavy; yet, ſevere as the ſtruggle would be, 'tis poſſible they might be huſhed to reſt: but there are others which blood only can obliterate! which can only ſleep in death! Such is the road I muſt travel. Not long ſince nature was jocund, the azure heavens were bright, and pleaſure was in every path; but now darkneſs, fathomleſs gulphs, guilty terrors, and all the dreadful phantoms of meditated deſolation, lie before me. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

LORD VIBRATE *at a table with a quarto volume reading.*

LORD VIBRATE.

THE ancient ſceptics doubted of every thing, affirmed nothing, and kept the judgment always in ſuſpenſe: All things, ſaid they, are equally indifferent, uncertain, and indeterminate. The mind is never to aſſent to any thing; that it may never be aſtoniſhed, or diſturbed, but enjoy a perfect

a perfect calm. *(Riſes with important wiſdom in his looks)* Such were the maxims of Pyrrho, and his diſciples; thoſe renowned ſages of antiquity! Well! And ſuch too have been my maxims, practically. All my life have I been wavering, uncertain, and indeterminate! A ſagacious ſceptic without knowing it; and as it were by inſtinct! It was but lately I diſcovered what a wiſe man I am! And yet it ſeems to me as if I were ſcarcely half wiſe enough, for I am told that I am to doubt of every thing which I find rather difficult. For example: that my wife Lady Vibrate is an extravagant rackety rantipole woman of faſhion, can I doubt that? No. That ſhe ſquanders my money, diſturbs my peace, and contradicts for contradiction's ſake, can I doubt that? No. Then have I not a daughter to marry, a law ſuit to begin, and a thouſand perplexing affairs ſo that I do not know which way to turn? Why all this appears true to me: but the ſceptics teach that appearances deceive, and that nothing is certain. I may be Lord Vibrate, or I may be the Grand Turk. Theſe doctrines are prodigiouſly deep. *(Conſiders)* But I muſt think of ſomething elſe juſt now. I have a thouſand things to do, and know as little where to begin as where they will end. Ay! All is uncertainty! *(Rings)* Harry! Edward!

SCENE II. *Enter* JENKINS.

JENK. Did your lordſhip call?

LORD V. Where are my ſervants? I want ſome of my plagues.

JENK. They are ready at hand, my lord. Here is your lordſhip's ſecretary.

SCENE III.

Enter MR. THOMPSON, *and exit* JENKINS.

LORD V. What is the reaſon, Mr. Thompſon, that nobody waits? Here am I, fretting myſelf to a mummy for the good of my family, while every body about me is as drowſy as the court of common council after dinner! Have they taken laudanum? Are they in a lethargy? Are they all dead?

THOM. If they were, your lordſhip would have the goodneſs to raiſe them.

LORD V. Don't you know how many people I have to ſee, and places I have to go to?

THOM. No, my lord.

LORD V. Why, did not I tell you?

THOM. Yes, my lord.

LORD V. Then how can you ſay you don't know?

THOM. Becauſe I venture to preſume, my lord, you do not know yourſelf.

LORD V. I am diſtracted with doubts. Harry!

SCENE IV. *Enter Footman.*

HAR. Did your lordſhip call?

LORD V. Where are you all? What are you about? I think you have lived long enough with me to know my way.

HAR. Yes, my lord: we know it very well.

LORD V. If you are not more attentive, I'll diſcharge you every one.

HAR. Oh no: *(Half aſide)* you will not do that.

LORD V. What are you muttering, ſirrah?

HAR. Only, my lord, that we know your way.

LORD V.

LORD V. Order the coach at eleven.

HAR. Yes, my lord.

LORD V. No. Order it at one.

HAR. Yes, my lord.

LORD V. Come back! Order it in ten minutes, and remember I am not at home. Come back! Don't order it at all.

HAR. Muſt viſitors be admitted?

LORD V. Yes. No. I cannot tell. I will conſider. Be within call. Thompſon!

[*Exit Footman.*

THOM. My lord.

LORD V. Step to that picture dealer. I will have the Guido. Yet——'tis a great ſum! No—— It is a maſter piece. I muſt have it. Why don't you go?

THOM. The picture is ſold, my lord.

LORD V. Sold? Gone? Have I loſt it? This is always the way! I am for ever diſappointed. Harry!

Re-enter Footman.

HAR. My lord.

LORD V. Did you go with the meſſage to the ſtable keeper, laſt night?

HAR. Yes, my lord.

LORD V. Let me know when he comes.

HAR. He will come no more, my lord.

LORD V. Come no more?

HAR. No, my lord.

LORD V. Why ſo?

HAR. He ſays you never know your own mind, my lord.

LORD V. Inſolent fellow!

HAR. Dr. Goſterman is below.

LORD V. Admit him. Stay. I cannot ſee him yet. In half an hour. In ten minutes. By and by.

[*Exit Footman.*

SCENE V.

LORD V. I muſt not waſte my time in theſe trifles. I muſt attend to this law buſineſs. I wiſh I could determine. What am I to do, Thompſon?

THOM. In what, my lord?

LORD V. The affair of the ejectment. If I once embroil myſelf in law, there will be no end; and if I do not the conſequences are ſtill worſe.

THOM. Then they are bad indeed, my lord.

LORD V. 'Tis ſtrange that I can come to no reſolution, on this ſubject.

THOM. (*Aſide.*) Nor on any other.

LORD V. I muſt decide this very day, or the time will be elapſed.

THOM. A lawyer I ſhould ſuppoſe, my lord, would give you the beſt advice.

LORD V. How? Are you mad, Thompſon? A lawyer give good advice!

THOM. The preſent poſſeſſor has held the eſtate twenty years.

LORD V. Not till tomorrow. I have time ſtill to make my claim. How ſhall I act?——Shall I never leave this hotel?——Has the builder been here?

THOM. No, my lord.

LORD V. I can get nothing done. My whole life long I have been diſtracted with the multiplicity of my affairs.

THOM. And ſo I am afraid, my lord, you always will be.

LORD

LORD V. Why ſo, ſir?

THOM. Becauſe your lordſhip undertakes ſo much, and does ſo little.

LORD V. So he has not been here?

THOM. No, my lord.

LORD V. Nor the lawyers?

THOM. No, my lord.

LORD V. Nor my ſteward?

THOM. No, my lord.

LORD V. Nor Sir George?

THOM. No, my lord.

LORD V. Where is Lady Vibrate? Where is Lady Jane? Are they all in their graves? Have none of them ſhewn ſigns of life yet?

THOM. Not one. Your lordſhip is the only perſon in the family who begin your miſeries ſo ſoon in a morning.

LORD V. The croſſes and cares that prey upon me are enough to make any man on earth miſerable.

THOM. Pardon me, my lord, but if you would care leſs both yourſelf and your ſervants would ſleep the more. My lady cares for nothing; and ſhe can ſleep, when ſhe is in bed, and ſing and dance and laugh at your lordſhip's cares and fears, when ſhe is up.

LORD V. She will drive me mad!

THOM. (*Going.*) Ah! Here ſhe is, as it were for the purpoſe.

LORD V. Tell Harry to admit the Doctor—No. Not juſt yet. Yes. In five minutes. I don't know when. [*Exit Thompſon.*

SCENE VI. *Enter* LADY VIBRATE.

LADY V. Upon my honor, my lord, you are the moſt inſupportable perſon imaginable. You vociferate worſe than the man who calls when my carriage ſtops the way. Is any body dying? Is the houſe on fire? Is the world at an end?

LORD V. By the life your ladyſhip leads, I ſhould ſuppoſe it is pretty near.

LADY V. You always give me ſuch ſhocking head-achs of a morning.

LORD V. You always give me ſuch ſhocking heart-achs of an evening.

LADY V. Did not I ſend to you laſt night, to requeſt your lordſhip would not diſturb me?

LORD V. It has been your ladyſhip's amuſement to diſturb me all your life.

LADY V. Your lordſhip knows I love amuſement.

LORD V. I have not ſlept a wink ſince.

LADY V. You had ſlept quite enough before. Pray how long are we to remain in this hotel? Your lordſhip ſhould remember, it is degrading for a man of rank to doze away life, in the ſtile of a colonel reduced to half pay.

LORD V. Your ladyſhip ſhould remember, it is degrading for a woman of rank to riot away life, and reduce her creditors to live without pay.

LADY V. Pſhaw! That is the old ſtory.

LORD V. But it is a very true ſtory. It is a great misfortune that perſons ſo oppoſite ſhould pair.

LADY V. A terrible one indeed. I am all gaiety and good humour: you are all turmoil and lamentation. I ſing, laugh, and welcome pleaſure wherever

wherever I find it: you take your lantern to look for misery, which the sun itself cannot discover.

LORD V. I am overwhelmed by crosses and vexations; and you participate in none of them.

LADY V. No. Heaven be praised!

LORD V. Will you attend to me, my lady, for half an hour?

LADY V. Mercy! Attend to you for half an hour! You, my lord, may think proper to be as miserable as Job: but I am not Job's wife.

LORD V. I insist, Lady Vibrate, on a serious answer. How ought I to act? What should I do, in this law affair?

LADY V. I cannot tell what you ought to do: but I know what you will do.

LORD V. Do you? What?

LADY V. Nothing.

LORD V. The recovery of this property would enable me to give my daughter a portion suitable to her rank. If it is lost, she will be almost destitute of fortune.

LADY V. You should have thought of that before, my lord.

LORD V. Before? Why I have thought of nothing else for years. I have asked every body's advice.

LADY V. And followed nobody's.

LORD V. It shall be so. The ejectment shall be served: proceedings shall commence.

LADY V. Ha, ha, ha!

LORD V. I say, they shall. I am determined.

LADY V. Ha, ha, ha! I know you, my lord.

LORD V. You know! I say they shall, if it be only to prove that you know nothing of the matter.

LADY V. Ha, ha, ha! A pleasant motive! But even that will not be strong enough.

LORD V. But it will, my lady.

LADY V. But it won't, my lord.

SCENE VII. *Enter* DR. GOSTERMAN.

LORD V. I say it will, my lady.

LADY V. I say it won't, my lord.

DR. Coot morgen, to my coot lordt und my coot laty.

LORD V. For heaven's sake, Doctor, stop my lady's tongue.

LADY V. For heaven's sake, Doctor, give my lord a quieting draught.

DR. I shall do every ting as vat you desire, my coot lordt und my coot laty.

LORD V. Can nothing silence you, Lady Vibrate? Shall I never have a quiet hearing? I want to talk with you and the Doctor on a thousand things.

LADY V. Yes; you with to have all the talk to yourself.

LORD V. On the marriage of our daughter.

LADY V. Oh, with all my heart. A marriage at least begins with music, feasting, and dancing. So say on.

LORD V. I am not yet determined in favor of Sir George.

LADY V. But I am. (*While they speak, the Doctor gesticulates in favor of each.*)

LORD V. Mr Delaval is an unobjectionable gentleman; and he was the first suitor.

LADY V. Sir George can sing; Sir George can dance; Sir George has air, grace, fashion, and fortune.

Lord V. Pshaw! His best qualities are prudence, and attention to his own concerns. Ask the Doctor.

Dr. He has fery mosh prudence, my coot lordt.

Lady V. Ha, ha ha! I vow, Sir George is the most airy, thoughtless, pleasant person living: except myself.

Dr. Ya; Sair Shorge is fery mosh pleasant: und my latyship is fery mosh more pleasant.

Lord V. Absurd. His humour is calm, cold, and serious.

Dr. Fery serious, inteet.

Lady V. Whimsical, animated, delightful.

Dr. Fery animate, fery delightful, upon my vordt.

Lord V. I never met a more discreet sensible man in my life.

Lady V. True: for he thinks of nothing but his pleasures.

Lord V. His affairs, you mean.

Lady V. I tell you, my lord, he is exactly what I wish: the very soul of levity, whim, and laughter.

Lord V. I tell you, my lady, he is exactly like myself: prudent, and full of sage hesitation. He considers before he acts. Does he not, Doctor?

Dr. Dat vas all yust as vat you say, my coot lordt.

Lady V. He never considers at all. Does he, Doctor?

Dr. Dat vas all yust as vat you say, my coot laty.

Lord V. How so? We cannot both be right.

Dr. You shall please to make me parson, my coot lordt. Sair Shorge vas all as vat you say; und

und all as vat my coot laty ſay. Mit my laty, he vas merry: mit my lordt, he vas ſad. Mit my laty, he vas laugh, und vas ſing, und vas tance: und he vas make melancholy, und miſery, und vas do all dat ſhall make agréable mit my lordt.

LORD V. Is he ſo variable?

DR. Ya, he vas fery moſh comply: fery moſh coot humeur. He vas alvay make agréable. Bote vas my lordſhip und my latyſhip know dat Mr. Delaſal vas com from Italy?

LADY V. Come where? To England?

DR. He vas in de houſe below. I vas ſee und ſpeak mit his ſalet.

LORD V. In this hotel?

DR. He vas yuſt arrife, und vas demandt dat he ſhall ſee my lordſhip, oder my latyſhip.

LADY V. I am very ſorry he is here. He is a dun of the moſt diſagreeable kind, and ſhall not ſee me; and I hope, my lord, you will no longer permit his addreſſes to Lady Jane. My word is given to Sir George. Come with me, Doctor.

[*Exeunt Lady Vibrate and Doctor.*

SCENE VIII. *Enter* MR. DELAVAL.

DEL. Pardon me, my lord, if I intrude with too little ceremony. Something I hope will be allowed to a mind much diſturbed, and a heart deeply wounded and impatient to eaſe its pangs.

LORD V. Which way deeply wounded, Mr. Delaval?

DEL. Can your lordſhip aſk? Was it not with your permiſſion I paid my addreſſes to Lady Jane? And was the ardour of my affection or the extent of my hopes unknown?

LORD

LORD V. Why, I did permit, and I did not. I had my doubts.

DEL. My viſits were daily, their purpoſe was declared, and I ſhould imagine I ſpoke more reſpectfully to ſay that you permitted than that you connived at them.

LORD V. True: but ſtill I had my doubts.

DEL. Thoſe doubts have ſtung me to the ſoul; and I could wiſh you had expreſſed them more decidedly.

LORD V. Impoſſible! Doubts here, doubts there, doubts every where. No rational man can be decided, on any point whatever. My doubts are my continual plagues: my whole life is conſumed by them,

DEL. It appears, my lord, you have conquered them on one ſubject.

LORD V. Ay indeed! I wiſh to heaven I had! What ſubject is that?

DEL. You have affianced your daughter to Sir George Verſatile.

LORD V. Humph!—Yes; and no. I have; and I have not. I cannot determine. Sir George is a prudent man, his eſtate is large, and the Verſatiles are an ancient race. But your family is ancient, you are prudent, and the wealth left by your uncle is at leaſt equal. What can I ſay? What can I do? I don't know which to take nor which to refuſe. I am everlaſtingly in theſe difficulties. I am haraſſed night and day by them: they are the night mare, they ſit upon my boſom, oppreſs me, ſuffocate me. I cannot act. I cannot move.

DEL. This, my lord, may be an apology to yourſelf, but the conſequence to me is miſery. Your daughter lived in my heart: with her I had pro-

miſed myſelf ages of happineſs; and had cheriſhed a paſſion, impatient perhaps, but, ardent and pure as her own thoughts. This paſſion your conduct authorized. My fortune, my life, my ſoul, were devoted to her. Mine was no light or wanton dalliance; nor did I expect a light and wanton conduct from the noble family of which your lordſhip is the head.

LORD V. What do you mean, Mr. Delaval? I told you I was undecided; and ſo I am ſtill. My lady, you know, was never much your friend. Sir George is her favourite.

DEL. And is Lady Jane equally changeable?

LORD V. I don't know. She is *my* daughter; and, judging by myſelf, I ſhould ſuppoſe ſhe is perplexed, and doubtful. She never, I believe, declared in your favour?

DEL. Not expreſsly, my lord. She referred me to time and you. 'Tis true I flattered myſelf her affections were wholly mine. Should ſhe prefer Sir George, or any other man, be my feelings what they will, I then am ſilenced. My heart could not be ſatisfied with cold compliance. Oh no! 'Tis of a different ſtamp. I am told ſhe is not at home. I hope however ſhe will not have the cruelty to deny me a laſt interview: till when I take my leave. Only ſuffer me to remark that, had you diſcovered in me any ſecret vice, any defects dangerous to the happineſs of the woman I adore, you then were juſtified in your preſent conduct. But, if you have no ſuch accuſation to prefer, I muſt do my feelings the violence to declare I cannot but think it highly unworthy of a man of honor. [*Exit.*

SCENE

SCENE IX.

LORD V. Mr. Delaval—Inſolent!—Highly unworthy of a man of honor?—I will challenge him.—He ſhall find whether I am a man of honor, or no. I will challenge him. Harry!

SCENE X. *Enter Footman.*

HAR. My lord.

LORD V. Run. Tell that Mr. Delaval—Hold—Yes, fly! Tell him—Stay. Get me pen ink and paper—I will teach him to inſult—No. I will not do him the honor to write. Order him back.

HAR. Order who, my lord?

LORD V. He ſhall give me ſatisfaction. In that at leaſt I am determined. He ſhall give—And yet what is ſatisfaction? Is it to be run through the body? Shot through the head? A man may then indeed be ſaid to be ſatisfied—I had forgotten my doubts on duelling—Tell my lady I wiſh to ſpeak to her. No—

HAR. She is here, my lord. [*Exit.*

SCENE XI. *Enter* LADY VIBRATE *and the* DOCTOR.

LADY V. What is the matter, my lord? You ſeem to be even in a worſe humour than uſual!

LORD V. Mr. Delaval has treated me diſreſpectfully!

LADY V. Have not I a thouſand times told you he is a diſagreeable impertinent perſon?

LORD V. Why, God forgive me, but I really find myſelf of your ladyſhip's opinion! 'Tis a thing I believe that never happened before!

LADY V. And a thing I believe that will never

happen again! I hope, my lord, you are now determined in favor of Sir George?

LORD V. Poſitively. Finally. I pledge my honor.

LADY V. You hear, Doctor.

DR. Ya, my coot laty; I vas hear.

LORD V. I ſay, I pledge my honor. I authoriſe you, my lady, to deliver that meſſage to the baronet: and, that I may not have time to begin to doubt, I will inſtantly be gone. [*Exit.*

SCENE XII.

LADY V. This is fortunate!

DR. Oh, fery moſh fortunate! fery moſh!

LADY V. Had Mr. Delaval married my daughter, we ſhould have had a continual ſermon on reaſon, common ſenſe, and good order! And theſe and ſuch like antediluvian notions muſt have been introduced to our family.

DR. Ah, dat ſhall be pad! fery pad inteet, my coot laty!

LADY V. Now that Sir George is the man, the danger is over.

DR. Dat is creat pleſſing!

LADY V. But what think you are my daughter's thoughts? I fear ſhe has a kind of eſteem for Delaval. He was her firſt lover.

DR. Ya; ſhe vas fery moſh eſteem Mr. Delafal, my coot laty.

LADY V. But I obſerve ſhe liſtens with great pleaſure to the gay prattle of Sir George.

DR. Oh! fery creat inteet, my coot laty.

LADY V. We muſt ſecond the riſing paſſion: for we muſt get rid of that ſolemn ſir.

DR. Dat vas all yuſt as vat you ſay, my coot laty.

LADY

LADY V. Go to her, Doctor; convince her how intolerable it will be to have a huſband whom ſhe cannot quarrel with, nor reproach. Paint in the moſt lively colours the ſtupid life ſhe muſt lead, with ſo reaſonable a man.

DR. I ſhall do efery ting as vat ſhall make agréable, my coot laty. Dat is my vay. My laty, I vas your moſh obliſhe fery omple ſairfant, my laty. [*Exeunt.*

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I. *The hall of the hotel.* WILLIAMS *and* HARRY. LUCY *ſpeaking to the maſter of the hotel.*

WILL.

ALL you ſay is very true, Mr. Harry. Our maſters ſuppoſe we have neither ſenſe nor feeling; yet exact every thing that requires the five ſenſes in perfection. They expect we ſhould know their meaning before they open their lips; yet won't allow we have common underſtanding.

HAR. More ſhame for 'em. I warrant for all that we can game, run in debt, get in drink, and be as proud and domineering as they for their lives.

WILL. Yes, yes: let them but change places and they would ſoon find we could riſe to their vices, and they could ſink to ours, with all the eaſe imaginable.

HAR. They have no ſuch notion though, Mr. Williams.

WILL. That is their vanity, Mr. Harry. I have lived with Mr. Delaval ever ſince he returned from India; and, though he is a good——*(Sees Lucy)* Hay! Surely—It muſt be her! Do you know that young woman, Mr. Harry?

HAR. No: but I have heard a ſtrange ſtory about her.

WILL. Ay!—It is!—What?—I am ſure it is Lucy!—What ſtrange ſtory have you heard?

HAR. Why that ſhe came here late laſt night with a young gentleman, now above, pretending to be his waiting maid.

WILL. With a gentleman!—*(Aſide)* Oh the jilt! Waiting maid to a man? I never heard of ſuch a thing!

HAR. Nor any body elſe.

WILL. *(Aſide)* The deceitful huſſey!

HAR. (*Hears a bell*) That's my lord's bell. I told you, he is never eaſy. I muſt go.

WILL. (*Aſide*) I am glad of it—By all means, Mr. Harry. Good-day— [*Exit Harry.*

SCENE II.

WILL. Run away with a gentleman! Oh!

LU. (*Coming forward*) I declare, there is Mr. Williams.

WILL. (*Aſide*) What a fool was I to believe ſhe loved me!

LU. *(Aſide)* How my heart beats! Dear, dear! I could wiſh to ſpeak to him—but then if any harm ſhould come of it?

WILL. (*Aſide*) She ſhall not eſcape me!

LU.

Lu. (*Aſide*) I ſhould like to aſk him how he does—But I muſt not betray my dear lady. (*Going*)

Will. (*Placing himſelf in her way*) I beg pardon, ma'am.

Lu. (*Aſide*) Does not he know me?

Will. I thought I had ſeen you before; but I find I am miſtaken!

Lu. (*Aſide*) What does he mean?

Will. You are very like a young woman I once knew.

Lu. (*Aſide*) How angry he looks!

Will. But ſhe was a modeſt pretty behaved perſon; and not an arrant jilt.

Lu. Who is a jilt, Mr. Williams?

Will. One Lucy Langford, that I courted and promiſed to marry: but I know better, now.

Lu. You do, Mr. Williams?

Will. I do, madam.

Lu. It is very well, Mr. Williams! It is very well! Pray let me go about my buſineſs!

Will. Oh, to be ſure! I have no right to ſtop you.

Lu. You have no right to ſpeak to me as you do, Mr. Williams.

Will. No, no; ha, ha, ha! I dare ſay, I have not.

Lu. (*Her paſſions riſing*) No, you have not; and ſo I beg you will let me paſs. My miſtreſs —I mean—

Will. Ay, ay! You mean, your maſter.

Lu. Do I, ſir? Well! Since you pleaſe to think ſo—ſo be it.

Will. All the ſervants know it is a man! Would you deny it?

Lu. I deny nothing, Mr. Williams; and, if you

you are minded to make this an excuſe for being as treacherous as the reſt of your ſex, (*Keeping down her ſobs*) you are very welcome, Mr. Williams—I ſhall neither die—nor cry, at parting.

WILL. I dare ſay not. The young gentleman above ſtairs will comfort you.

LU. (*Burſts into tears*) It is a baſe falſe ſtory. I have no young gentleman above ſtairs, nor below ſtairs neither, to comfort me! and you ought to know me better.

WILL. Did you or did you not come here late laſt night?

LU. What of that?

WILL. With a young gentleman?

LU. No. Yes. Don't aſk me ſuch queſtions.

WILL. No! You are aſhamed to anſwer them.

SCENE III. MARIA *from the ſtaircaſe.*

MAR. (*Calls*) Lucy!

LU. Ma'am! Sir! Coming, ſir!

WILL. There! There! I will ſee what ſort of a ſpark it is, however.

LU. (*Struggling*) Be quiet, then! Keep away! You ſhan't!

MAR. (*Deſcending*) What is the matter? Who is moleſting you?

LU. (*To Maria*) Go back, ſir! Go back!

WILL. I will ſee, I am determined!

SCENE IV. DELAVAL *from a room door.*

DEL. Williams!

WILL. I tell you, I will. (*Looking at Maria*) Hay! Bleſs me!

MAR.

MAR. Why, Lucy! Mr. Williams!

WILL. My young lady, as I live!

DEL. Why do not you anſwer, Williams?

WILL. Coming, ſir!

MAR. Mercy! It is my brother's voice! What ſhall I do?

LU. Hide your face with your handkerchief, ma'am. Pull down your hat.

MAR. Pray do not betray me, Mr. Williams.

LU. If you do, I will never ſpeak to you as long as I have breath to draw.

WILL. How betray?

LU. Don't ſay you know us. Mind! Not for the world!

[*Exeunt Maria and Lucy up the ſtaircaſe.*

SCENE V.

DEL. What is it you are about, Williams?

WILL. Nothing, ſir.

DEL. What do you mean by nothing? Whom were you wrangling with?

WILL. Me, ſir? Wrangling, ſir?

DEL. Why are you ſo confuſed?

WILL. Why, ſir, I—I committed a ſmall miſtake. I was aſking—aſking after a gentleman that that that proved not to be a gentleman—that is—not not *the* gentleman that I ſuppoſed.

DEL. Why did you not come back with your meſſage?—Have you learnt the addreſs of Sir George?

WILL. Yes, ſir: he lives in Upper Groſvenor-ſtreet; his name on the door.

DEL. Well, be in the way.—The day ſhall not paſs before I ſee him. My own wrongs I could forgive. He it ſeems is preferred; and perhaps I have

I have no right to complain: But for his injuries to my ſiſter he ſhall render me a dear account.

[*Exit.*

WILL. What can be the reaſon of Miſs Delaval's diſguiſe?

LU. (*Peeping from the top of the ſtairs*) Hſt! Hſt! Mr. Williams!

WILL. Is it you?—Oh! now I ſhall know.

[*Exit up the ſtaircaſe.*

SCENE VI.

LADY VIBRATE *and* LADY JANE.

LADY V. Really, daughter, I cannot underſtand you.

LADY J. No wonder, madam; for I do not half underſtand myſelf.

LADY V. Is it poſſible you can heſitate? The good humour and complaiſance of Sir George might captivate any woman.

LADY J. They are very engaging: but they are dangerous.

LADY V. Which way?

LADY J. His character is too pliant. If others are merry, ſo is he: if they are ſad, he is the ſame. Their joys and ſorrows play upon his countenance: but, though they may ſlightly graze, they do not penetrate his heart. Even while he relieves, he ſcarcely feels them.

LADY V. Pſhaw! He is a delightful man.

LADY J. I grant he does his utmoſt. But it is a folly to be the ſlave even of an endeavour to pleaſe.

LADY V. Ha, ha, ha! Upon my honor, you are a whimſical young lady! Afraid of marrying

a man

a man becauſe of his aſſiduous endeavours to pleaſe! As if that were a huſband's failing! You can prefer no ſuch accuſation againſt Mr. Delaval.

LADY J. I own he is of a very different character. Firm and inflexible, he imagines he makes virtue his rule, and reaſon his guide.

LADY V. Firm indeed? No, no: ferocious, obſtinate, perverſe. Sir George tries to be agreeable, and is ſucceſsful: Mr. Delaval has no fear of offending, and does not miſs his aim.

LADY J. Heaven help us! We all have faults and follies enough.

LADY V. Mr. Delaval never was approved by me; and this morning he has inſulted your father.

LADY J. Inſulted! How do you mean, madam? Mr. Delaval is abroad! Has he written?

LADY V. No. He is here.

LADY J. Here! And has he not thought proper to let me know of his arrival?

LADY V. No, no. The haughty gentleman has only thought proper to reproach Lord Vibrate for admitting the pretenſions of Sir George. He is too proud to endure a competitor.

LADY J. Indeed! Such pride is the very way to inſure his competitor ſucceſs. Inſulted my father!

LADY V. I will leave you to judge how deeply when I tell you that, fluctuating and undecided as Lord Vibrate always is, he was ſo offended that he pledged his honor in favor of Sir George.

LADY J. Inſult my father, and not deign to let me know of his arrival!

LADY V. I hope, when Sir George comes, you will admit him.

LADY J. Certainly, madam; certainly.

LADY V. And that Mr. Delaval will be denied.

LADY J. It ſeems I need give myſelf no concern about that: the gentleman will not even take the trouble to ſend up his name.

LADY V. I am glad you feel it properly.

LADY J. Pardon me, madam. I will not condeſcend to feel it, in the leaſt. It ſhall not affect me; no not for a moment. I had indeed conceived a very different opinion of Mr. Delaval. I am glad I have diſcovered my error, before it is too late. I could not have believed it poſſible! But it ſhall not diſturb me. It ſhall give me no uneaſineſs. I will keep myſelf perfectly cool, and unconcerned, and—ungenerous, unfeeling man!

[*Exit.*

SCENE VII.

LADY V. She is delightfully piqued, and Sir George will ſucceed!

SIR G. (*Without*) Are the ladies above?

FOOT. (*Without*) Yes, ſir.

LADY V. I hear him! The very ſound of his voice inſpires mirth.

Enter SIR GEORGE.

SIR G. Ah, my dear Lady!

LADY V. I am infinitely glad to ſee you, Sir George! You are come at a lucky moment.

SIR G. Is then my fate decided?

LADY V. It is! It is!

SIR G. Happy tidings!

LADY V. But firſt tell me—

SIR G. Any thing! Every thing! Speak!

LADY V. Are you not of my opinion?

SIR G.

SIR G. To be ſure I am! What is it?

LADY V. That pleaſure is the buſineſs of life.

SIR G. Oh, beyond all doubt!

LADY V. That inſpecting accounts—

SIR G. Is vulgar drudgery!

LADY V. And looking after our affairs—

SIR G. A vile loſs of time!

LADY V. That care in the face denotes—

SIR G. The owner a fool!

LADY V. And that ſorrow is a very ridiculous thing!

SIR G. Fit only to excite laughter!

LADY V. Why then, Sir George, I am your friend.

SIR G. Ten thouſand thouſand thanks! But, what ſays my lord?

LADY V. Would you believe it? He conſents, has pledged his honor, and ſent the meſſage by me.

SIR G. Rapture! Enchantment!

LADY V. Yes. The reign of pleaſure is about to begin!

SIR G. Light, free, and fantaſtic; dancing an eternal round!

LADY V. No domeſtic troubles!

SIR G. No grave looks!

LADY V. No ſerious thoughts!

SIR G. We will never think at all!

LADY V. No cares, no frowns!

SIR G. None, none, by heavens, none! It ſhall be ſpring and ſunſhine all the year!

LADY V. Then our appearance in public!

SIR G. Splendid! Dazzling!—Driving to the opera!

LADY V. Dreſſing for Ranelagh!

SIR G. A phaeton to-day!

LADY V. A curricle to-morrow!

SIR G. Daſh over the downs of Piccadilly, deſcend the heights of St. James's, make the tour of Pall-mall, coaſt Whitehall—

LADY V. Back again to Bond-ſtreet—

SIR G. Scour the ſquares, thunder at the doors!

LADY V. How do you do? How do you do? How do you do?

SIR G. And away we rattle, till ſtone walls are but gliding ſhadows, and the whole world a Galanty ſhow.

LADY V. You are a charming man, Sir George! and Lady Jane is yours.

SIR G. My dear lady, your words inſpire me! I am all air, ſpirit, ſoul! I tread the milky way, and ſtep upon the ſtars!

LADY V. But you muſt not, before the marriage, talk thus to Lord Vibrate. Silly man! He and you will never agree.

SIR G. Oh yes, but we ſhall. I—I—I like his humour!

LADY V. Do you?

SIR G. Prodigiouſly! Whenever I am in his company, I am as grave as Good Friday.

LADY V. Indeed!

SIR G. He is full of ſage reflection. So am I. Doubtful of every thing. So am I. Anxious for the preſent, provident for the future. So am I. Overflowing with prudential maxims; ſententious, ſentimental, and ſolemn. So am I.

LADY V. You ſentimental!

SIR G. As grace before meat, in the mouth of an alderman.

LADY V. You ſolemn!

SIR G. As the black patch on a judge's wig.

LADY V. I muſt tell you, Sir George, I hate ſentiment.

SIR G. Oh! So do I!

LADY V. Solemnity is all a farce.

SIR G. And thoſe that act it buffoons. I know it!

LADY V. I love mirth, pleaſantry—

SIR G. Humour, whim, wit, feaſting, revelry, ſhout, ſong, dance, and joke. So do I! So do I! So do I!

LADY V. The very mention of duties and cares makes me ſplenetic.

SIR G. Curſe catch duties! I hate them! Give me life, the wide world, the fair ſun, and the free air!

LADY V. I ſay, give me midnight, the rattling of chariot wheels, and the lighted flambeau!

SIR G. Ay! A rout! A craſh of coaches! A lane of footmen! A blazing ſtair-caſe! A ſqueeze through the anti-chamber! Card tables! Wax lights! Patent lamps! Bath ſtoves and ſuffocation! Oh lord! Oh lord!

LADY V. Exquiſite! You are a delightful man!

SIR G. Am I?

LADY V. You enter perfectly into all my ideas!

SIR G. Do I?

LADY V. And deſcribe them even better than I myſelf can.

SIR G. Oh, my dear lady!

LADY V. Yes, you do.

SIR G. No, no.

LADY V. But then, ha, ha, ha! That you

ſhould be able to fall in with my lord's abſurdities ſo readily!

Sir G. Nothing more eaſy. I have one infallible rule to pleaſe all tempers. I learnt it of our friend the Doctor.

Lady V. Sure! What is that?

Sir G. I prove that every body is always in the right.

Lady V. Prove my huſband to be in the right! Do if you can.

Sir G. My lord loves to be reſtleſs, and doubtful, and diſtreſſed: he delights in teaſing and tormenting himſelf; and why ſhould I interrupt his pleaſures?

Lady V. Ha, ha, ha! Very true.

Sir G. I fall in with his humour. I ſhew him how rational it is, afford him new arguments for diſcontent, and encourage him to be miſerable.

Lady V. Ha, ha, ha! Oh you malicious divle!

Sir G. My dear lady, you miſtake. I do it from pure compaſſion. It makes him happy. Every child delights in the ſqueaking of its own trumpet; and ſhall I have the cruelty to break the toy? A well bred perſon is cautious never to contradict. It is become a very eſſential requiſite to ſay Ay, and No, in the moſt complying manner poſſible.

Lady V. Ah, Sir George, you are one of the dear inimitable few.

Sir G. Only a copy of your charming ſelf.

Lady V. You and I muſt totally reform our ſtupid family. Amuſement ſhall be our perpetual occupation.

Sir G. Day and night.

Lady V.

LADY V. We will commence with your marriage. It ſhall be ſplendid!

SIR G. A feaſt, a concert, a ball! The whole town ſhall ring with it!

LADY V. I hate a private wedding. A ſmall ſelect party is my averſion.

SIR G. Oh, nothing is ſo inſipid! Pleaſure cannot be calm.

LADY V. I wiſh to be ſeen, and heard—

SIR G. And talked of, and paragraphed, and praiſed, and blamed, and admired, and envied, and laughed at, and imitated!

LADY V. I live but in a crowd.

SIR G. Give me hurry, noiſe, embarraſſment—

LADY V. Confuſion, diſorder—

SIR G. Tumult, tempeſt, uproar, elbowing, ſqueezing, preſſing, puſhing, ſqueaking, ſqualling, fainting!

LADY V. Exquiſite! Tranſporting!

SIR G. You remember I receive maſks this evening?

LADY V. Can I forget?

SIR G. You will be there?

LADY V. There? Ay! Though I ſhould come in my coffin.

SIR G. Ha, ha, ha! An excellent idea! I never yet ſaw a maſk in the character of a Memento mori.

LADY V. Ah! Turn about, and you will ſee a Memento mori without a maſk!

SIR G. What, my lord?

LORD V. *(Without)* I cannot tell. I will conſider, and ſend an anſwer.

LADY V. Here he comes, to interrupt our delightful dreams: a very antidote to mirth and pleaſure.

pleaſure. He will give you a full doſe of the diſmals. But you muſt ſtay and ſpeak to him. Remember, his honor is pledged: inſiſt upon that. I pity but cannot relieve you. [*Exit.*

SCENE VIII. *Enter* LORD VIBRATE.

LORD V. I have been too ſudden. I ought not to have pledged my honor. This is the conſequence of haſty determination: of not doubting before we decide. Shall I never correct myſelf of that fault? (*Sees Sir George. They look full at each other till Sir George catches the ſame diſmal kind of countenance*) Ah, Sir George! Here am I, brim full of anxiety and turmoil!

SIR G. Alas! Man was born to trouble.

LORD V. Perplexed on every ſide; thwarted in every plan: no domeſtic comfort, no friend to grieve with me, no creature to ſhare my miſeries.

SIR G. Melancholy caſe!

LORD V. One croſſing me, another blaming me, and my wife driving me mad!

SIR G. Diſtreſſing ſituation!

LORD V. My cares laughed at, my vigilance mocked, my ſufferings inſulted! And why? Becauſe I am cautious! becauſe I doubt! becauſe I am provident! What is man without money?

SIR G. A fountain without water.

LORD V. A clock without a dial.

SIR G. (*Warming and becoming rapid as he proceeds*) What is it that buys reſpect, and honor, and power, and privilege, and houſes, and lands, and wit, and beauty, and learning, and lords, and commons, and—

LORD V.

LORD V. Why money!—Then the manners of this diſſipated age!

SIR G. They are truly ſhocking! They, they, they are abſurd, ridiculous, odious, abominable.

LORD V. And to what do they lead?

SIR G. To every thing that is horrid! To loſs of peace, loſs of property, loſs of principle, loſs of reſpect, bankruptcy, ruin, contempt, diſeaſe, and death!

LORD V. *(Aſide)* Yes, yes: he's the man! I do not think I repent——Heaven be praiſed, Sir George, you are a man of underſtanding; an economiſt. You will regulate your family and affairs to my heart's content.

SIR G. Oh! it ſhall be my ſtudy! my daily practice! my duty! my delight!

LORD V. You make me happy—and yet I cannot but wonder, being ſo rational a man, how you and my lady ſhould agree ſo well.

SIR G. Dear, my lord, why ſo? Women are the moſt manageable good creatures upon earth.

LORD V. Women good?

SIR G. Indubitably: when they are pleaſed.

LORD V. So they ſay is the devil.

SIR G. The ſweet angels deſerve to be humoured. Their ſmiles are ſo enchanting! And, ſhould they frown, who can be angry when we know the dear wayward ſyrens will only look the more bewitching, as ſoon as they are out of their pouts? It is ſo delightful to ſee the Sun breaking from behind a cloud.

LORD V. Pſhaw! When a woman begins to grow old—

SIR G. Huſh! The Sun—The Sun never

grows old. I grant you that formerly there uſed to be old women: but there are none now!

Lord V. Then you think me a fool for being wretched at my wife's thoughtleſſneſs, caprice, and impertinence?

Sir G. No, I don't. Every body tells us that wives were born to be the plague of their huſbands.

Lord V. And mine is the greateſt of plagues!

Sir G. What is a wife's duty? To obey her lord and maſter. 'Tis her marriage promiſe, and the law binds her to it. She is the miniſter of his pleaſures, the handmaid of his wants, his goods, his chattels, his vendible property.

Lord V. Ay: we find the huſband may take the wife to market in a halter.

Sir G. In which I ſhould hope he would afterward hang himſelf!

Lord V. My lady thinks of nothing but revelling, and racketing, and turning the world upſide down!

Sir G. 'Tis a great pity.

Lord V. Her tongue is my torment.

Sir G. The perpetual motion! It never ceaſes!

Lord V. Then how can you like her company?

Sir G. She is not *my* wife.

Lord V. No, or you would not be ſuch good friends. Did ſhe ſay any thing concerning the marriage?

Sir G. Oh, yes. She delivered your lordſhip's kind meſſage.

Lord V. What, that I had pledged my honor?

Sir G. Irrevocably.

Lord V.

LORD V. I was very raſh. Haſty reſolutions bring long repentance—She inſiſts that the nuptials ſhall be public!

SIR G. Does ſhe, indeed?

LORD V. For my part, I hate any diſplay of vanity.

SIR G. It is extremely ridiculous! What would our oſtentation, pomp, and magnificence be, but advertiſing ourſelves to the world as fools and coxcombs?

LORD V. Is that a rational uſe of money?

SIR G. Should it not be applied to relieve the aged, comfort the poor, ſuccour the diſtreſſed—

LORD V. What?

SIR G. Reward merit, encourage induſtry, and promote the public good?

LORD V. Promote a farce!

SIR G. Very true: the public good is a farce!

LORD V. The true uſe of money is to defend our rights——

SIR G. Revenge our wrongs, purchaſe for the preſent, provide for the future, ſecure power, buy friends, bid defiance to enemies, and lead the world in a ſtring!

LORD V. Ay! Now you talk ſenſe. So, if I ſhould conſent, the wedding ſhall be private.

SIR G. Calm: tranquil.

LORD V. No feaſting.

SIR G. No dancing: no muſic: no pantomime pleaſures: but all ſilent, ſerene, pure, and undiſturbed.

LORD V. We will juſt invite a ſelect party.

SIR G. A choſen few.

LORD V. None but our real and ſincere friends.

SIR G. And then we ſhall be ſure the houſe will hold them.

SCENE IX. *Enter* HARRY.

HAR. My lord, the builder deſires to know if you will ſee him?

LORD V. I. am coming. I will be with him in five minutes.

HAR. He ſays, he can ſtay no longer.

LORD V. Then let him go. I will be with him preſently.

HAR. The lawyers have ſent word they are waiting for your lordſhip, at Counſellor Demur's chambers.

LORD V. Very well. There let them wait. The law is ſlow, and every man ought to be ſlow who is going to law. Come with me, Sir George. I have ſome papers to conſult you upon.

HAR. The tradeſpeople too are below.

LORD V. Thus it is! I am eternally beſieged! I never have a moment to myſelf!

HAR. This is the tenth time they have been here, by your lordſhip's own appointment.

LORD V. What of that?

HAR. They are become quite ſurly. They all abuſe me; and ſome of them don't ſpare your lordſhip.

LORD V. Do you hear, Sir George?

SIR G. Oh ſhocking! Your tradeſpeople are a ſad unreaſonable ſet. You cannot convince them that, if we were to keep our appointments, be punctual in our payments, and know what we do want and what we do not, we ſhould no longer be perſons of faſhion.

SCENE X. *Enter* THOMPSON.

THOM. I am juſt come from the lawyers, my lord. The courts are ſitting, their clients waiting, and,

and, if your lordſhip do not go immediately, they will be gone.

LORD V. Very true; and this laſt opportunity of ſerving an ejectment will be loſt. I have a thouſand things to attend to. Would you be kind enough, Sir George, to go and——Hold—No—I don't know what to do! The eſtate is valuable: but law is damnable. I may loſe the cauſe: it may coſt even more than it is worth. Writs of error! Brought into chancery! Carried up to the Lords!

SIR G. Then the ſtupidity of juries, the fictions of law, the chicanery of lawyers, their tricking, twiſting, turning, lying, wrangling, browbeating, cajoling!

LORD V. Their frauds, colluſions, perjuries, robberies!

SIR G. Ay! Detinue, replevin, plea, imparlance, replication, rejoinder, rebutter, ſurrejoinder, ſurrebutter, demurrer—

LORD V. Take breath! We ought both to demur: for it is the devil's dance, and both Plaintiff and Defendant are obliged to pay the piper.

[*Exeunt.*

END OF ACT III.

ACT

ACT IV.

SCENE I. *The apartments of* LORD VIBRATE.

LADY JANE, *her* WOMAN, *the* DOCTOR, *and* FOOTMAN.

LADY J. *(To Footman.)*

TELL the young gentleman I wait his pleaſure. (*Exit Footman,*) It is very ſingular! Men, I believe, do not often travel attended by waiting maids!

DR. Dat is de myſtery, my Laty Shane.

LADY J. What can he want to ſay to me?

DR. Dat is de more myſtery, my Laty Shane. He vas fery moſh young, und fery moſh handſome, und he vas fery moſh make fall in loſe mit you, my Laty Shane.

LADY J. Nonſenſe!

DR. My Laty Shane vas ſo full of de beauty dat you vas make ſharm efery pody, my Laty Shane! Und as your name vas make mention, my Laty Shane, he vas all ſo pale as deaths!

LADY J. (*Aſide to her woman.*) You are ſure, you ſay, Mr. Delaval made enquiries; and ſent up his name?

WOM. (*To Lady Jane.*) Law, my lady! Could you think he would not? I ſaw him before ten o'clock; juſt as you ſent me where I was kept ſo long: and, goodneſs! Had you beheld what a taking he was in! I warrant you, my lady, he aſked a hundred and a hundred queſtions in a breath; and all about you!

LADY J. Well, go now where I deſired you.

WOM. Yes, my lady. [*Exit.*

SCENE II. *Footman returns introducing* MARIA. *Salute.*

MAR. (*Aſide*) Why do I tremble thus?

LADY J. (*To Doctor*) What a charming countenance!

DR. Oh, fery moſh ſharming!

LADY J. How prepoſſeſſing his appearance!

DR. Ya: he vas fery moſh poſſeſs.

Re-enter Footman.

FOOT. Sir George has ſent this domino and maſk, to know if they meet your ladyſhip's approbation.

LADY J. Ha, ha, ha! Italian refinement, copied after ſome Venetian Ciciſbeo. Put them down.

MAR. (*Aſide. Regarding the domino and maſk.*) Here his preſents, and here his affections are now directed! How ſhall I ſupport the ſcene?

LADY J. You wiſh, ſir, to ſpeak to me.

MAR. (*Faltering*) Embarraſſed by the—liberty—I have taken—

LADY J. Let me requeſt you to wave all apology, and tell me which way I can oblige or ſerve you.

MAR. You are acquainted with Sir George—I—you—Pray pardon me. I am overcome. My ſpirits are—ſo agitated—

LADY J. (*Eagerly reaching a chair.*) Sit down, ſir. You are unwell! Bleſs me! Doctor!

DR. (*To Lady Jane ſignificantly.*) I vas tell my Laty Shane vat it vas—Here, ſair, you ſhmell mit dat elixir; und I ſhall make your neck bandt tie looſe, und— (*Going to looſen her neckcloth.*)

MAR. (*Alarmed and putting him away.*) Pray forbear!

DR. (*Aſide. Imitating the heaving of the boſom.*) Ah ha! Der Teufel! He vas a vomans!

LADY J. Are you better?

MAR. A moment's air. (*Goes to the window.*)

DR. (*Aſide*) Dat vas de ſometing myſtery!

MAR. (*To Lady Jane.*) If you would indulge me a few minutes in private?

LADY J. By all means—Doctor—(*Whiſpers.*)

DR. Ya, ya, my Laty Shane, I vas unterſtandt; und I vas do efery ting as vat ſhall make agréable. Dat is my vay——Sair, I vas your moſh obliſhe fery omple ſairfant, ſair. I vas unterſtandt. My Laty Shane, I vas your moſh obliſhe fery omple ſairfant, my Laty Shane—(*Aſide*) Ah ha! [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

LADY J. Take courage, ſir.

MAR. I am unequal to the taſk. This diſguiſe ſits ill upon me.

LADY J. What diſguiſe?

MAR. I am not what I ſeem. I—

LADY J. Speak!

MAR. I am a woman.

LADY J. Heavens!

MAR. Diſtreſſed——

LADY J. By poverty?

MAR. Oh no. I come to claim your counſel.

LADY J. In what way?

MAR. To prevent miſchief. The ſhedding of blood.

LADY J. The ſhedding of blood?

SIR G. (*Without.*) I will be with you again preſently, my lady.

MAR. Mercy! It is Sir George! What ſhall I do? He muſt not ſee me! This way—(*Hurries on the domino and maſk.*) Aid me, dear lady, to

conceal myſelf; and excuſe conduct which I cannot now explain.

LADY J. Depend upon me, madam. (*Aſide*) This is as unaccountable as it is alarming!

SCENE IV. MARIA *in the back ground.* SIR GEORGE *introduced by a Footman.*

SIR G. I come, my charming Lady Jane, flying and full of buſineſs, to conſult you on a thouſand important affairs!

LADY J. Surely! What are they?

SIR G. Upon my ſoul, I don't know!

LADY J. Heyday!

SIR G. They have every one ſlipped my memory.

LADY J. Miraculous!

SIR G. Whenever I have the inexpreſſible pleaſure of enjoying your ſmiles, I can think of nothing elſe.

MAR. (*Aſide*) Perjured man!

LADY J. My ſmiles! Ha, ha, ha! What if I ſhould happen to frown?

SIR G. Impoſſible! No lowering clouds of diſcontent dare ever ſhade the heavenly brightneſs of your brow.

MAR. (*Aſide*) Oh!

LADY J. Very prettily ſaid, upon my word. Where did you learn it?

SIR G. From you! 'Tis pure inſpiration, and you are my muſe.

LADY J. No, no; 'tis a flight beyond me. I love plain proſe.

SIR G. So do I! A mere common place matter of fact man, I! The weather, the time of the

day, the hiſtory of where I dined laſt, the names and titles of the company, the diſhes brought to table, the health, ſickneſs, deaths, births and marriages of my acquaintance, and ſuch like toothpick topics for me! I am as literal in my narratives as any town-crier; and repeat them as often.

LADY J. Yet I ſhould wiſh to talk a little common ſenſe.

SIR G. Oh! So ſhould I! I aſſure you, I am for pros and cons and whys and wherefores. Your Ariſtotles, and Platos, and Senecas, and Catos are my delight! I honor their precepts, venerate their cogitations, and adore the length of their beards! which luckily reminds me of the maſquerade. Is my domino to your taſte?

LADY J. Ha, ha, ha! Ancient ſages, dominos, and taſte.

SIR G. Did you not notice the colour?

LADY J. Oh! The taſte of a domino is in its colour?

SIR G. Why, no: but there may be meaning.

LADY J. Explain.

SIR G. Mine is ſaffron.

LADY J. What of that?

SIR G. Cruel queſtion! Hymen and his robe.

LADY J. Oh oh!

MAR. *(Aſide)* She is pleaſed with his perfidy.

LADY J. A very ſignificant riddle truly!

MAR. *(Advancing)* Are you ſo ſoon to be married, ſir?

SIR G. Bleſs me, Lady Jane! What frolickſome gentleman is this? In maſquerade ſo early, and my domino!

MAR. Permit me once more to aſk, if you are ſoon to be married?

SIR G.

SIR G. Your queſtion, ſir, is improperly addreſſed. Put it, if you pleaſe, to that lady.

MAR. (*Aſide to Sir George*) Is that the lady to whom the queſtion ought to be put?

SIR G. (*Aſide*) What does he mean?—Will you indulge me, ſir, by taking off that maſk?

MAR. No, ſir.

SIR G. 'Tis mine; and I am induced to claim it, from the great curioſity I have to ſee your face.

MAR. Do you not adore this lady?

SIR G. (*Aſide*) An odd queſtion!—More than language can expreſs!

MAR. (*Aſide*) Oh, falſehood!—Then I put myſelf under her protection.

SIR G. You know guardian angels when you ſee them. Pray, however, let us become acquainted.

MAR. For what reaſon?

SIR G. 'Twould gratify me. I ſhould like you.

MAR. Oh, no!

SIR G. I certainly ſhould. There is ſomething of pathos and muſic in your voice, which, which—I never heard but one to equal it.

MAR. And whoſe voice was that?

SIR G. Oh, that—that was a voice ſo ingenuous, ſo affectionate, ſo faſcinating!

MAR. But whoſe voice was it?

LADY J. (*Aſide*) What does this mean?

MAR. Tell me, and you ſhall ſee my face.

LADY J. (*Aſide*) Aſtoniſhing!

SIR G. I muſt not—I dare not—I ſhall never hear it more!

MAR. (*Aſide*) My feelings ſo overpower me I ſhall betray myſelf. (*To Lady Jane*) Permit me to retire.

LADY J. You have alarmed and ſtrangely moved me! I hope you will return?

MAR. Oh yes; and moſt happy to have your permiſſion.

SIR G. Why do they whiſper? (*To Maria going*) Will you not let me know who you are?

MAR. No.

SIR G. Why?

MAR. Becauſe—I am one you do not love.

[*Exit.*

SIR G. One I do not love!

LADY J. (*Aſide*) This is incomprehenſible!

Re-enter MARIA *haſtily.*

MAR. (*To Lady Jane*) Oh, madam!

LADY J. What more is the matter?

MAR. For your life, do not mention the names of either of theſe gentlemen to the other!

LADY J. What gentlemen?

MAR. He is coming! They do not perſonally know each other. If they ſhould, there would be murder! I dare not ſtay. For the love of God beware! [*Exit maſked as Delaval enters.*

SCENE V.

SIR G. (*Calling*) Harkye, ſir, come back! My domino! I ſhall want it in an hour or ſo—Who have we here?

DEL. (*With much agitation of manner*) Your ladyſhip's very humble ſervant.

LADY J. Oh! How do you do? How do you do? (*Aſide*) Who can that lady be? She knows them both, it ſeems; and knows their rivalſhip!

Her

Her terror is contagious! Is their hatred ſo deadly? I ſhall certainly betray them to each other.

DEL. (*Aſide*) What a ſtrange behaviour ſhe puts on! Does ſhe affect to overlook me? (*Obſerving Sir George*) Who is this?

LADY J. Are you juſt arrived?

DEL. This very morning: ſooner I fear than—than—was deſired.

LADY J. Do you think ſo? (*To Sir George*) Why don't you go to Lady Vibrate? She is waiting.

SIR G. 'Tis the fate of forty.

LADY J. What?

SIR G. To wait. (*Aſide. Eyeing Delaval*) Who can this ſpark be, that ſhe wants me gone?—Pray what is the name of the youth that has made ſo free with my domino and maſk?

LADY J. I really don't know.

SIR G. Don't know?

LADY J. I can't anſwer queſtions at preſent. I am flurried; out of humour.

DEL. I fear at my intruſion?

LADY J. I wiſh you had come at another time.

DEL. I expected my viſit would be unwelcome: let me requeſt, however, to ſay a few words.

LADY J. Well, well; another time, I tell you: when I am alone.

SIR G. (*Aſide*) Oh ho!

DEL. They were meant for your private ear.

SIR G. (*Aſide*) Were they ſo?

DEL. (*Aſide*) By her confuſion and his manner, I ſuſpect this to be the baſe betrayer of my ſiſter's peace: the man whoſe bare image makes my heart ſicken, and my blood recoil.

LADY J.

LADY J. (*Aſide*) Will they neither of them go? —Why do you loiter here, Sir Ge— (*Coughs*)

SIR G. I muſt ſtay till the gentleman brings back my domino and maſk, you know. (*Aſide*) I'll not leave them.

DEL. (*Aſide*) I am perſuaded it is he—Excuſe me, ſir: would you indulge me with the favour of your name?

SIR G. My name, ſir! My name is—

LADY J. (*Aſide to Sir George*) Huſh! Don't tell it!

SIR G. (*To Lady Jane*) Why not?

LADY J. I inſiſt upon it!

SIR G. Nay, then—My name, ſir, is a very pretty name. Pray what is yours?

DEL. (*Aſide*) Yes, yes, it muſt be he—Have you any reaſon to be aſhamed of it?

SIR G. Sir! Did you pleaſe to ſpeak? Upon my honor, you are a very polite pleaſant perſon.

DEL. (*Aſide*) If I ſhould be miſtaken—I acknowledge, ſir, there is but one man, whoſe name I *do* but whoſe perſon I do *not* know, to whom that queſtion would not have been rude in the extreme. Should you not be that man, I aſk your pardon.

SIR G. Should I not! Sir, that I may be ſure I *am* not, allow me to aſk his name?

DEL. His name is—

LADY J. (*Screams and ſinks on the chair*) Oh!

DEL. Good Heavens!

SIR G. What has happened?

DEL. Are you ill?

SIR G. Is it cramp, or ſpaſm?

DEL. Surely you have not broken a blood veſſel?

SIR G. Shall I run for a phyſician?

LADY J. Inſtantly.

SIR G. I fly! Yet I muſt not leave you!

LADY J. No delay, if you value my life.

DEL. Your life! I will go!

LADY J. *(Detaining him)* No, no.

SIR G. I fly! I fly! [*Exit.*

SCENE VI. *Enter* LADY JANE'S *woman.*

WOM. Dear! my lady, what is the matter?

LADY J. Lead me directly to my own room.

DEL. Shall I carry you?

LADY J. No: only give me your arm, and come with me. I want to talk to you. I wiſh to hear what you have to ſay. *(Aſide to her woman)* When Sir George comes back, tell him I am partly recovered, but muſt not be diſturbed. It is my poſitive order.

DEL. *(Aſide)* What does ſhe whiſper?

LADY J. Stay—The Doctor may come in; but not Sir George.—Mind, on your life, not Sir George!—Come, ſir.

DEL. *(Aſide)* This ſudden change is myſterious. Here is concealment.

LADY J. Come, come.

[*Exeunt Delaval and Lady Jane.*

SCENE VII.

WOM. I purteſt, it has put me in ſuch a fluſter that I am quite all of a twitter!

Enter SIR GEORGE *followed by* DR. GOSTERMAN.

SIR G. Come along, Doctor! Make haſte Where is Lady Jane?

WOM. In her own room.

SIR G.

SIR G. Is ſhe worſe?

WOM. No, ſir; much better: but ſhe muſt not be diſturbed.

SIR G. Nay, nay, I muſt ſee her.

WOM. Indeed, ſir, I can let nobody in but the Doctor.

SIR G. Why ſo? Is not the gentleman I left here now with her?

WOM. I ſuppoſe ſo, ſir.

SIR G. And I not admitted?

WOM. On no account whatever.

SIR G. He allowed, and I excluded! Indeed, I ſhall attend the Doctor.

WOM. Upon my honor, ſir, you muſt not.

SIR G. Upon my honor, I will! My rival ſhall not eſcape me!

DR. Ah ha! De rifal! Ha, ha, ha! Dat is coot! De young fer dat vas mit Laty Shane vas make you ſhealouſy? Ha, ha, ha! Dat is coot! Bote dat is as noting at all. I ſhall tell you de ſometing myſtery. He vas no yentlemans. Ah ha! He vas a vomans.

SIR G. A woman!

DR. Ya, ſair. He vas make acquaintance mit me, und I vas make acquaintance mit him; und he vas make faint, und I vas tie looſe de neck bandt, und den! Ah ha! I vas diſcober de mans vas a vomans!

SIR G. You aſtoniſh me!

DR. Ya, ſair. I vas make aſtoniſh myſelf.

WOM. Won't you go to my lady, Doctor?

DR. Ya, my tear. Let me do. Laty Shane is fery pad; und I ſhall af de eſſence, und de cream, und de balſam, und de ſyrup, und de electric, und de magnetic, und de mineral, und de vegetable,

table, und de air, und de earſe, und de ſea, und all, &c. [*Exit; gabbling.*

SCENE VIII.

SIR G. I ſhould never have ſuſpected a woman! A ſtout, tall, robuſt figure! And for what purpoſe diſguiſe herſelf? That may be worth enquiry. I will wait and if poſſible have another look at the lady.

SCENE IX. *Enter* LORD VIBRATE, *and* MR. THOMPSON.

LORD V. Two hundred and forty pounds! 'Tis a very large ſum, Mr. Thompſon.

THOM. So large, my lord, that I have no means of paying it. I muſt languiſh out my life in a priſon.

LORD V. No, Mr. Thompſon, no: you ſhall not do that. I will—And yet—Two hundred—A priſon—I don't know what to ſay. If I pay this money for you, I ſhall but encourage all around me to run in debt.

THOM. It is a favour too great for me to hope.

LORD V. You are a worthy man, and a priſon is a bad place—I—you—Pray what is your opinion, Sir George? Is it not dangerous for a man to have the character of being charitable?

SIR G. No doubt, my lord! It is the very certain way for his houſe to be beſieged by beggars!

LORD V. The maſter who pays the debts of one domeſtic makes himſelf the debtor of all the reſt.

SIR G. He changes a ſet of ſervants into a ſet

of duns! He firſt encourages them to be extravagant, and then makes it incumbent upon himſelf to pay for their follies and vices! He not only bribes them to be idle, and inſolent, but to waſte his property as well as their own!

Lord V. It is, as you ſay, a very ſerious caſe. I—I am ſorry for your misfortune, Mr. Thompſon—very ſorry—but—really—

Sir G. Misfortune! What misfortune?

Lord V. He has fooliſhly been bound for his ſiſter's huſband; and muſt go to priſon for the debt.

Sir G. To priſon?

Lord V. You have ſhewn me how dangerous it would be for me to interfere.

Sir G. Very true: very true.—He has lived with your lordſhip ſeveral years?

Lord V. He has; and I eſteem him highly.

Sir G. A worthy man, whom it would be no diſgrace to call your friend?

Lord V. None. Still, however, conſequences muſt be weighed. I muſt take time to conſider. 'Tis folly to act in a hurry.

Sir G. Very true—caution—caution—Is it a large ſum?

Lord V. No leſs than two hundred and forty pounds!

Sir G. Caution is a very excellent thing—Two hundred and forty—A fine virtue—Two—I would adviſe your lordſhip to it by all means—hundred and forty—(*Looks round*) Will you permit me juſt to write a ſhort memorandum: a bit of a note? (*Goes to a table*) I muſt ſend to a certain place. (*Writes*) Excuſe me a moment.

Lord

LORD V. What can be done in this affair, Mr. Thompſon?

THOM. Nothing, my lord. I am reſigned. When I aſſiſted my brother, I did no more than my duty. Thoſe who lock me up in a priſon may, for aught I know, do theirs: yet, though they are at liberty and I ſhall be confined, I would neither change duties nor hearts with them. (*Going.*)

SIR G. Harkye! Harkye! Mr. Thompſon! Will you juſt deſire this to be taken as it is directed? (*Aſide to him*) Don't ſay a word: 'tis a draft on my banker. Diſcharge your debt; and be ſilent—You are very right, my lord: we cannot be too conſiderate; leſt, by miſtaken benevolence, we ſhould encourage vice.

THOM. Sir George! My lord!

SIR G. Why now will you not oblige me, Mr. Thompſon? Pray let that be delivered as it is directed. You ſurely will not deny me ſuch a favor—For you know, my lord, if we give—

THOM. Indeed, I—

SIR G. Will you begone? Will you begone? (*Puſhes him kindly off*)—If we give without—without—

LORD V. Poor fellow! I ſuppoſe he is afraid of being taken.

SIR G. Oh! Is that it?—If we give, I ſay, with—too—Pſhaw! I have loſt the thread of my argument.

LORD V. I muſt own, this is a dubious caſe. Perhaps I ought to pay the money. (*Calls*) Mr. Thompſon!—I don't think I ought to let him go to priſon. What ſhall I do, Sir George?

SIR G. Whatever your lordſhip thinks beſt.

LORD V. But there is the difficulty!—Mr. Thompſon! He is gone. How fooliſh this is now! *(As he is going off)* Harry! Run after Mr. Thompſon, and call him back. One would think a man going to priſon would like me be wiſe enough to doubt, and take time to conſider of it.

[*Exit.*

SCENE X. *Enter* LADY VIBRATE.

LADY V. I aſſure you, Sir George, I am very angry. I have been waiting an age, expecting you would come and give your opinion on my maſquerade dreſs.

SIR G. Why did not your ladyſhip put it on?

LADY V. On, indeed? It has been on and off twenty times! I have ſent it to have ſome alteration. Beſide it is growing late: maſks will be calling in on you, in their way to the Opera-houſe, and you not at home to receive them!

SIR G. I aſk ten thouſand pardons, but you know I am the moſt thoughtleſs creature on earth.

LADY V. So I would have you. Were you like the ſober punctual Mr. Delaval, I ſhould hate you. But then—

SCENE XI.

DELAVAL *returning from* LADY JANE'S *apartment.*

LADY V. *(Aſide)* Here the wretch comes!

SIR G. *(Aſide)* So, ſo! now I ſhall interrogate the lady. She has a very maſculine air! *(Delaval bows to Lady Vibrate)* A tolerable bow that, for a woman!

LADY V. *(Aſide)* He wiſhes, I ſuppoſe, to ſermonize

monize me: but I ſhall not give him an opportunity—Are you coming, Sir George?

DEL. (*Aſide*) Ha!

SIR G. I will follow your ladyſhip in a minute.

DEL. (*Aſide*) I was right! It is he!

SIR G. (*Aſide*) She eyes me very ferociouſly!

LADY V. I ſhall juſt call in upon you: or, if not, we ſhall meet afterward. I expect you to be very whimſical and ſatiric upon all my friends; ſo pray put on your beſt humour. Grave airs, you know, are my averſion. [*Exit.*

SCENE XII.

DEL. (*Aſide*) That was intended for me. Now for my gentleman.

SIR G. (*Aſide*) She really has a very fierce look! A kind of threatening phyſiognomy; and would make no bad Grenadier.

DEL. I underſtand, your name is Sir George Verſatile?

SIR G. (*Aſide*) A baſs voice too!—At your ſervice, ſir; or madam; I really cannot tell which.

DEL. Cannot!

SIR G. No, I cannot upon my ſoul! (*Aſide*) A deviliſh black chin!

DEL. I have an account to ſettle with you, ſir.

SIR G. Have you? (*Aſide*) What the plague can ſhe mean?

DEL. When can I find you at leiſure, and alone?

SIR G. Alone?

DEL. Yes, ſir; alone.

SIR G. Muſt this account then be privately ſettled, madam?

DEL.

DEL. Madam!

SIR G. I beg your pardon! *Sir*, ſince you prefer it.

DEL. If you know me, ſir, your inſolence is but a confirmation of the baſeneſs of your character!

SIR G. I beg a million of pardons! I really do not know you.

DEL. Then, ſir, when you do, you will find cauſe to be a little more ſerious.

SIR G. (*Aſide*) What a Joan of Arc it is! There is danger ſhe ſhould knock me down.

DEL. Be pleaſed to name your time.

SIR G. (*Aſide*) Zounds! She inſiſts upon a tête-à-tête!—I hope you will be kind enough to excuſe me, but I am juſt now ſo preſſed for time that I have not a moment to ſpare. Company is waiting. I muſt begone to the maſquerade. You I preſume are for the ſame place, and are ready dreſſed. I am your moſt obedient—

DEL. (*Seizing him*) Sir, I inſiſt upon your naming an hour, to-morrow; and an early one.

SIR G. Why, what the plague!—Here muſt be ſome miſtake! Permit me to aſk, do you know Dr. Goſterman?

DEL. Yes, ſir.

SIR G. Was you not juſt now in danger of fainting?

DEL. Faint? I faint!

SIR G. It would I think be a very extraordinary thing! But ſo he told me: with other particulars.

DEL. Abſurd! Dr. Goſterman has not ſeen me for ſeveral months.

SIR G. He ſaid, ſir, you were a woman; and perhaps,

perhaps, from that error, I may have unconſciouſly provoked you to behaviour which would elſe have been rather ſtrange. Have I given you any other offence?

DEL. Yes, ſir; a mortal one.

SIR G. Mortal!

DEL. And mortal muſt be the atonement.

SIR G. If ſo, the ſooner the better. Let it be immediately.

DEL. No. I have ſerious concerns to ſettle. So have you! 'Tis time you ſhould think of things very different from maſquerading. Name your hour to-morrow morning; then, take an enemy's advice, retire to your cloſet, and make your will.

SIR G. To whom am I indebted for this high menace, and this haughty warning? Your name, ſir?

DEL. That you ſhall know when next we meet: not before.

SIR G. What age are you, ſir?

DEL. Age!

SIR G. Such peremptory heroes are not uſually long lived.

DEL. You are right, ſir; my life is probably doomed to be ſhort. But this is trifling. Name your hour.

SIR G. At ten to-morrow morning.

DEL. The very time I could wiſh. I will be with you at your own houſe, inform you who I am, and, then—

SIR G. So be it.— [*Exeunt.*

SCENE

SCENE XIII. *Changes to the houſe of* SIR GEORGE. *A ſuite of apartments richly decorated and numerous maſks: ſome dancing; others paſſing and repaſſing.*

SIR GEORGE *and* LADY VIBRATE *advance, unmaſked.*

LADY V. What is the matter with you, Sir George? You are ſuddenly become as dull and almoſt as intolerable as my lord himſelf.

SIR G. I own, I had ſomething on my ſpirits. But it is gone. Your ladyſhip's vivacity is an antidote to ſplenetic fits.

LADY V. Oh, if you are ſubject to fits of the ſpleen, I renounce you.

SIR G. No, no! Heigho! Ha, ha, ha! Let me go merrily down the dance of life!

LADY V. Ay! or I will not be your partner.

SIR G. As for recollections, retroſpective anxieties, and painful thoughts, I I I hate them. They ſhall not trouble me. For if a man, you know, were to be ſprung on a mine to-morrow, ha, ha, ha! it were folly to let that trouble him to-day.

LADY V. Sprung on a mine? You talk wildly!

SIR G. True. I am a wild unaccountable non deſcript. I am any thing, every thing, and ſoon may be—

LADY V. What?

SIR G. Nothing. Strange events are poſſible; and poſſible events are ſtrange.

LADY V. Come, come, caſt off this diſagreeable humour; and join the maſks.

SIR G. With all my heart. A maſk is an excellent

cellent utenſil; and may be worn with a naked face.

LADY V. (*Retiring*) Why don't you come? You uſed to be all compliance.

SIR G. So I fear I always ſhall be. 'Tis my worſt virtue. Call it a vice, if you pleaſe; and perhaps it is even then my worſt.

LADY V. I really do not comprehend you.

SIR G. No wonder. Man is an incomprehenſible animal! But no matter for that. We will be merry ſtill ſay I—at leaſt till to-morrow.

LADY V. (*Joins the maſks*) Yonder is Lady Jane.

SCENE XIV.

SIR G. Nay then, I am on the wing!

MARIA (*Advancing*) Whither?

SIR G. Ah! Have I found you again? So much the better! I have been thinking of you this half hour.

MAR. Ay? That muſt have been a prodigious effort!

SIR G. What?

MAR. To think of one perſon for ſo great a length of time.

SIR G. True. Were you my bittereſt enemy, you could not have uttered a more galling truth. I am glad I have met with you, however.

MAR. So am I. 'Tis my errand here.

SIR G. You now, I hope, will let me ſee your face?

MAR. I might, perhaps, were it but poſſible to ſee your heart.

SIR G. No, no: that cannot be. I have no heart.

MAR. I am ſorry for it!

Sir G. So am I. But come, I wiſh to be better acquainted with you.

Mar. And I wiſh you to be better acquainted with yourſelf. You know not half your own good qualities.

Sir G. Ha, ha, ha! My good qualities? Heigho!

Mar. Your fame is gone abroad! Your gallantry, your free humour, your frolics in England and Italy, your—Apropos: I am told, Lady Jane is captivated by the ardour and delicacy of your paſſion! Is it true?

Sir G. Are you an inquiſitor?

Mar. Are you afraid of inquiſitors?

Sir G. Yes.

Mar. I believe you.

Sir G. You may. Keep me no longer in this ſuſpenſe. Let me know who you are?

Mar. An old acquaintance.

Sir G. Of mine?

Mar. Of one who was formerly your friend.

Sir G. Whom do you mean?

Mar. You muſt have been a man of uncommon worth; for I have heard him beſtow ſuch praiſes upon you that my heart has palpitated if your name was but mentioned!

Sir G. Of whom are you talking?

Mar. Lord! that you ſhould be ſo forgetful! That can only have happened ſince you became a perſon of faſhion: for no man once remembered his friends better. It is true, they were then uſeful to you.

Sir G. Sir, I—Be warned! Purſue this no farther.

Mar. You little ſuſpected at that time you were on the eve of being a wealthy baronet. Oh no!

no! And to ſee how kind and grateful you were to thoſe who loved you! No one would have believed you could ſo ſoon have become a perfect man of the mode; and with ſo polite and eaſy an indifference ſo entirely have forgotten all your old acquaintance! I dare ſay you ſcarcely remember the late Colonel Delaval.

SIR G. Sir!

MAR. His daughter too has utterly ſlipped your memory?

SIR G. I inſiſt on knowing who you are!

MAR. How different it was when, your merit neglected, your ſpirits depreſſed, and your poverty deſpiſed, you groaned under the oppreſſion of an unjuſt and ſelfiſh world! How did your drooping ſpirits revive by the foſtering ſmiles of the man who firſt noticed you, took you to his houſe and heart, and adopted you as his ſon! Poor Maria! Silly girl, to love as ſhe did! Where is ſhe?

SIR G. This is not to be endured!

MAR. What was her offence? You became a baronet! Ay! True, that was her crime. Yet, when your fortunes were low, it was not imputed to you as guilt.

SIR G. (*Aſide.*) Damnation!

MAR. Are your new friends more affectionate than your old? Fortune ſmiles, and ſo do they. Poor Maria! Has Lady Jane ever heard her name? Will you invite her to your wedding? (*Her voice continually faltering.*) Do. She ſhould have been your bride: then let her be your bride maid—She is greatly altered—She will be leſs beautiful—now—than her fair rival. Her birth is not quite ſo high—but—if a—heart—a heart—

a heart—(*Struggling with her feelings ſinks into Sir George's arms, and her maſk falls off.*)

Sir G. Heavens and earth! 'Tis ſhe! Help! 'Tis Maria! Who waits?

SCENE XV. *Enter* Lady Jane.

Lady J. What is the matter?

Sir G. Help! Help!——Salts! Hartſhorn! —Water! Help!

Lady J. Bleſs me! This lady again.

Sir G. Is ſhe then known to you?

Lady J. No! Who is ſhe?

Sir G. Quick! Quick!

Lady J. Nay but, tell me?

Sir G. I cannot! Muſt not!

Lady J. Muſt not?

Sir G. Dare not!—She revives; and, to my confuſion, will ſoon tell you herſelf. Maria! Are you better, Maria?

Mar. I am very faint.

Lady J. My carriage is at the door. Will you truſt yourſelf to me?

Mar. Oh yes. I am weak—Very weak, and very fooliſh! But I ſhall not long diſturb your happineſs. I hope ſoon to be paſt that.

Sir G. Paſt! Oh Maria!—I—have no utterance—Lady Jane, you will preſently know of me what to know of myſelf is—Oh!—No matter. Not then for my ſake but for pity, for the love of ſuffering virtue, be careful of this lady; whom when you know, as ſoon you muſt, you will deſpiſe and abhor the lunatic, the wretch, that could —Maria—I—I— [*Exit abruptly.*

SCENE

SCENE XVI. *Enter* DELAVAL.

DEL. What is the matter? Any accident? Was not that Sir George?——Good God! My ſiſter!

LADY J. Your ſiſter!

DEL. How comes this? Why this dreſs? And with that apoſtate! that wretch! Speak, Maria!

MAR. I cannot.

LADY J. Mr. Delaval, be more temperate. Your ſiſter's ſpirits and health ought not to be trifled with by your violence. I do not know, though I think I gueſs, her ſtory. I hope you have a brother's tenderneſs for her?

DEL. That ſhall be ſhortly ſeen. A few hours will ſhew how dear ſhe is to my heart.

LADY J. I fear you cheriſh bad paſſions: ſuch as I never can love, and never will ſhare.

DEL. Well, well, Lady Jane, that is not to be argued now. I am a man, and ſubject to the miſtakes of man. There are feelings which can and feelings which cannot be ſubdued. I muſt run my courſe, and take all conſequences.

MAR. Oh God! In what will they end?

LADY J. No more of this, Mr. Delaval. Come with me: lead your ſiſter to my carriage. She ſhall be under my care. She can inſpire thoſe ſympathies which your too ſtubborn temper ſeems to deſpiſe.

DEL. Indeed, indeed, you wrong me! [*Exeunt.*

END OF ACT IV.

ACT

ACT V.

SCENE I. MARIA *in her proper dreſs,* LADY JANE *and* LUCY, FOOTMEN *waiting. Breakfaſt equipage on the table.*

LADY JANE.

REMOVE thoſe things. We have done.

[*Exeunt Footmen.*

MAR. What is it o'clock?

LU. Juſt ſtruck ten, ma'am.

LADY J. Lady Vibrate is a ſad rake! She did not leave the maſquerade till five this morning.

MAR. And Sir George not there!

LADY J. After the diſcovery of laſt night, could you ſuppoſe he would be ſeen revelling at ſuch a place?

MAR. I dread another and more horrible cauſe! My brother!

LADY J. Mr. Delaval, you know, ſlept in this houſe.

MAR. But he has been out theſe two hours!

LU. What then, ma'am? Is not Mr. Williams on the watch? You know, ma'am, you may truſt Mr. Williams with your life.

MAR. If all were ſafe, he would be back.

LADY J. Pray calm your ſpirits.

MAR. Nay, nay, but Mr. Williams muſt have been here before this, if ſomething fatal had not happened!

LU. I am ſure, ma'am, you frighten me to death!

LADY J. (*Aſide*) Her terrors are but too well founded!

MAR. (*Footſteps without*) What noiſe is that?

Lu. Bleſs me!

Lady J. See who it is!

Lu. (*After opening the door*) Law, ma'am! I declare it is Mr. Williams!

SCENE II. *Enter* Williams.

Lu. Well, Mr. Williams! Every thing is right; is not it? All is as it ſhould be?

Will. That is more than I know.

Mar. Why then the worſt is paſt.

Will. No, ma'am: I can't ſay that, either.

Lady J. Nay but, what news do you bring? Speak.

Will. Why you know my maſter laſt night made enquiries how to find the chambers of Counſellor Demur: ſo, when he went out this morning, I obſerved your directions and followed him. He went to the Counſellor's, in Lincoln's Inn; and there I left him and hurried away to Sir George's, to enquire and hear all I could: though it was rather unlucky that I was not acquainted in the family.

Lady J. Did not you make uſe of my name?

Will. Oh yes, my lady. Beſide, ſervants your ladyſhip knows are not ſo ſuſpicious as their maſters: they ſoon become friendly together: ſo in five minutes Sir George's valet and I were on as intimate a footing as we could wiſh.

Mar. And what did he ſay? Tell me.

Will. Why, ma'am, he ſaid that Sir George did not leave his own houſe laſt night, after the fainting of the young gentleman.

Lu. That was you, you know, ma'am.

Will. And, what is more, that he did not go to bed; but walked up and down the room till daylight

daylight in the morning; and then called I don't know how often to warn the ſervants that he ſhould not be at home to any body whatever, except to a ſtrange gentleman.

MAR. My brother!

WILL. Why yes, ma'am, according to the deſcription, it could be nobody elſe.

LADY J. And at what hour was Mr. Delaval to be there?

WILL. (*Aſide*) Zooks! I forgot to aſk—That, that, my lady, I did not learn. So, this being all the ſervants told me, I ran poſt haſte to make my report to you.

MAR. The worſt I foreboded will happen!

LADY J. What can be done?

WILL. Perhaps it will be beſt for me to go back to Sir George's, wait for the arrival of my maſter, and, if he ſhould come, haſten away as faſt as I can to inform you of it.

LU. That is a good thought, Mr. Williams! Is not it, madam? A very good thought, indeed! Don't you think it is, my lady?

LADY J. I know not what we can do better.

MAR. Nay but, while Williams is bringing us the intelligence, every thing we moſt dread may happen.

LU. Dear! So it may!

WILL. Suppoſe then, madam, I ſhould ſtay at my poſt; and diſpatch Sir George's valet to you with the news?

LU. Well, that is the beſt thought of all! I am ſure you will own it is, madam.

MAR. I know not what to think.

LADY J. We muſt reſolve; or, while we are deliberating—

MAR.

MAR. Merciful God! Run, Williams! Fly! Save my brother! Save Sir George!

LADY J. Succeed but in this, and command all we have to give.

WILL. I will do my beſt.

LU. That I am ſure he will. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *Changes to the houſe of* SIR GEORGE. —SIR GEORGE *walking in perturbation of mind. After ſome time he looks at his watch.*

SIR G. He will ſoon be here—Five minutes—but five minutes and then—*(Walks again, throws himſelf on a ſofa, takes up a book, toſſes it away and riſes)* What is man's firſt duty? To be happy. Short ſighted fool! The happineſs of this hour is the miſery of the next! *(Again walks and looks at his watch)* What is life? A tiſſue of follies! Inconſiſtencies! Joys that make reaſon weep, and ſorrows at which wiſdom ſmiles. Pſhaw! There is not between ape and oyſter ſo ridiculous or ſo wretched a creature as man. *(Walks)* Oh Maria! *(Again conſulting his watch)* I want but a few ſeconds. My watch perhaps is too faſt. *(Rings)*

Enter Footman.

SIR G. Has nobody yet been here?

FOOT. No, ſir.

SIR G. 'Tis the time to a minute. *(Loud knocking)* Fly! If it be the perſon I have deſcribed, admit him. [*Exit Footman.*

SIR G. Now let the thunder ſtrike!

SCENE IV. DELAVAL *introduced. They ſalute.*

SIR G. Good morning, ſir!

DEL. You recollect me?

SIR G. Perfectly.

DEL. 'Tis well.

SIR G. I have been anxious for your coming. Your menace lives in my memory; and I ſhall be glad to know the name of him who has threatened ſuch mortal enmity.

DEL. A little patience will be neceſſary. I muſt preface my proceedings with a ſhort ſtory.

SIR G. I ſhall be all attention. Pleaſe to be ſeated. Wave ceremony, and to the ſubject—*(They ſit)* Now, ſir.

DEL. About ſix years ago, a certain youth came up from college; poor, and unprotected. He was a ſcholar, pleaſing in manner, warm and generous of temper, of a reſpectable family, and ſeemed to poſſeſs the germ of every virtue.

SIR G. Well, ſir.

DEL. Hear me on: my praiſes will not be tedious. Chance made him known to a man who deſired to cheriſh his good qualities; and the purſe, the experience, and the power of his benefactor, ſuch as they were, he profited by to the utmoſt. Received as a ſon, he ſoon became dear to the family: but moſt dear to the daughter of his friend; whoſe tender age and glowing affections made her apt to admire the virtues ſhe heard her father ſo ardently praiſe, and encourage. You are uneaſy?

SIR G. Be pleaſed to continue.

DEL. The aſſiduities of the youth to gain her heart

heart were unabating; and his pretenſions, poor and unknown as he then was, were not rejected. The noble nature of his friend ſcorned to make his poverty his crime. Why do you bite your lip? Was it not generous?

SIR G. Sir!

DEL. *(Firmly)* Was it not?

SIR G. Certainly! Nothing could—equal the —generoſity.

DEL. The health of his benefactor was declining faſt; and the only thing required of the youth was that he ſhould qualify himſelf for the cares of life, by ſome profeſſion. He therefore entered a ſtudent in the Temple; and the means were furniſhed by his protector, till the end was obtained. Was not this friendſhip?

SIR G. It was.

DEL. The lady, almoſt a child when firſt he knew her, increaſed in grace and beauty faſter than in years. Sweetneſs and ſmiles played upon her countenance. She was the delight of her friends, the admiration of the world, and the coveted of every eye. Lovers of fortune and faſhion contended for her hand: but ſhe had beſtowed her heart—had beſtowed it on a—Sit ſtill, ſir; I ſhall ſoon have done. I am coming to the point. Five years elapſed; during which the youth received every kindneſs friendſhip could afford, and every proof chaſte affection had to give. Theſe he returned with promiſes and proteſtations that ſeemed too vaſt for his heart. I would ſay for his tongue—Are you unwell, ſir?

SIR G. Go on with your tale.

DEL. His benefactor, feeling the hand of death ſteal on, was anxious to ſee the two perſons deareſt

to his heart happy before he expired; and the marriage was determined on, the day fixed, and the friends of the family invited. The intended bridegroom appeared half frantic with his approaching bliſs. Now, ſir, mark his proceeding. In this ſhort interval, by ſudden and unexpected deaths, he becomes the heir to a title and large eſtate. Well! Does he not fly to the arms of his languiſhing friend? Does he not pour his new treaſures and his tranſports into the lap of love? Coward and monſter!

SIR G. (*Both ſtarting up*) Sir!

DEL. Viler than words can paint! Having robbed a family of honor, a friend of peace, and an angel of every human ſolace, he fled, like a thief, and concealed himſelf from immediate contempt and vengeance in a foreign country. But contempt and vengeance have at length overtaken him: they beſet him: they face him at this inſtant. The friend he wronged is dead: but the ſon of that friend lives, and I am he.

SIR G. 'Tis as I thought!

DEL. You are—I will not defile my lips by telling you what you are.

SIR G. I own that what I have done—

DEL. Forbear to interrupt me, ſir. You have nothing to plead, and much to hear. Firſt ſay, did my ſiſter, by any improper conduct, levity of behaviour, or fault or vice whatever, give you juſt cauſe to abandon her?

SIR G. None! None! Her purity is only exceeded by her love.

DEL. Then how, barbarian, how had you the heart to diſgrace the family and endanger the life of a woman whoſe ſanctified affection would have embraced

embraced you in poverty, peſtilence, or death; and who, had ſhe poſſeſſed empires, would have beſtowed them with an imperial affection?

Sir G. Sir, if you aſk, Have I committed errors? call them crimes if you will, Yes. If you demand, Will I juſtify them? No. If you require me to atone for them, here is my heart: you have wrongs to revenge, ſtrike; and, if you can, inflict a pang greater than any it yet has known.

Del. Juſtice is not to be diſarmed by being braved. To the queſtion. It can be no part of your intention, and certainly not of mine, that you ſhould marry my ſiſter. Something very different muſt be done.

Sir G. What? Name it?

Del. You muſt give me an acknowledgment, written and ſigned by yourſelf, that you have baſely and moſt diſhonorably injured, inſulted and betrayed Maria Delaval: and this paper, immediately as I leave your houſe, I ſhall publiſh in every poſſible way; till my ſiſter ſhall be ſo appeaſed, and honor ſo ſatiated, that vengeance itſelf ſhall cry, Hold!

Sir G. Written by me! Publiſhed! No. I will ſign no ſuch paper.

Del. So I ſuppoſed; and the alternative follows. Here I am: nor will I quit you, go where you will, till you ſhall conſent to retire with me to ſome place from which one of us muſt never return. Should I be the victor, flight, baniſhment from my native country, and the bitterest recollections of the villanies of man, muſt be the fate of me and my ſiſter. If I fall, you then may triumph and ſhe languiſh and die unrevenged. This,

or the written acknowledgment. Conſider, and chuſe.

SIR G. What can I anſwer? The paper you ſhall not have. My life you are welcome to: take it.

DEL. Have you not brought diſgrace enough on my family? Would you make me an aſſaſſin? My ſiſter and my father loved you. Let me, if poſſible, feel ſome little return of reſpect for you.

SIR G. Having wronged the ſiſter, would you have me murder the brother? Already the moſt guilty of men, would you make me the worſt of fiends? Though an enemy, be a generous one.

DEL. Plauſible ſophiſt! The paper, ſir: or, man to man and arm to arm, cloſe the ſcene of my diſhonor, or your own. The written acknowledgment. Determine. *(Walks away and views the pictures)*

SIR G. *(Apart)* Why, ay! 'Tis come home! I have ſought it, deſerved it, 'tis fallen, and the rock muſt cruſh the reptile! — Then welcome ruin. The ſword muſt decide. *(Goes to take his ſword, but ſtops)* The ſword? What! Betray the ſiſter and aſſaſſinate the brother? Oh God! And ſuch a brother! Stern, but noble minded: indignant of injury, peerleſs in affection, and proud of a ſiſter whom the world might worſhip; but whom I, worthleſs wretch, in levity and pride of heart, have abandoned. *(Aloud)* Mr. Delaval!

DEL. Have you reſolved to ſign?

SIR G. Hear me.

DEL. The written acknowledgment!

SIR G. My behaviour to your ſiſter is—what I cannot endure to name—'Tis hateful! 'Tis—infamous!

famous! My obligations to your moſt excellent father, the reſpect you have inſpired me with, and my love for Maria—

DEL. Inſolent! Inſufferable meanneſs! The paper, Sir!

SIR G. Angry though you are, Mr. Delaval, you muſt hear me. I ſay, my love, my adoration of Maria has but increaſed my guilt. It has made me dread her contempt. I durſt not face the angel whom I had ſo deeply injured.

DEL. Artifice! Evaſion! Cowardice!—Your ſignature!

SIR G. *(Snatching up his ſword from the table)* You ſhall have it. Follow me.

DEL. Fear me not.

SIR G. *(Stopping ſhort)* Hold, Mr. Delaval. Juſtice is on your ſide. If your firmneſs be not a ſavage ſpirit of revenge, if you do not thirſt for blood, you will feel my only reſource will be to fall on your ſword. I cannot lift my arm againſt you.

DEL. Then ſign the acknowledgment.

SIR G. Can you in the ſpirit even of an enemy aſk it? Do you not already deſpiſe me enough? Think for a moment: am I the only man that ever erred? Is it ſo wonderful that a giddy youth, whoſe habitual failing was compliance, by ſudden accident elevated to the pinnacle of fortune, ſurrounded by proud and ſelfiſh relations of whoſe approbation I was vain, is it ſo ſtrange that I ſhould be overpowered by their dictates, and yield to their intreaties? Your friendſhip or my death is now the only alternative. Suppoſe the latter: will it honor you among men? At the man of blood the heart of man revolts! Will it endear you to Maria?

Maria? Kind forgiving angel, and hateful to myſelf as her affection makes me, I laſt night found that affection ſtill as ſtrong, ſtill as pure, as in the firſt hour of our infant loves. Lady Jane—

DEL. Forbear to name her! 'Tis profanation from your lips! No more caſuiſtry! No ſubterfuge! The paper!

SIR G. Can no motives—

DEL. None!

SIR G. My future life, my ſoul, ſhall be devoted to Maria.

DEL. The paper!

SIR G. Obdurate man! *(Reflects a moment)* You ſhall have it. *(Goes to the table to write, during which Delaval remains deep in thought and much agitated)* Here, ſir! ſince *you* will not be generous, let *me* be juſt. 'Tis proper I remove every taint of ſuſpicion from the deeply wronged Maria.

DEL. *(Reads with a faltering voice)* "I George "Verſatile, once poor and dependent, ſince vain "fickle and faithleſs, do under my hand acknow-"ledge I have perfidiouſly—broken my pledged "promiſe—to the moſt deſerving—lovely—and *(Begins in much agitation to tear the paper.)*

SIR G. Mr. Delaval?

DEL. Damn it—I can't—I can't ſpeak. Here! Here! *(Striking his boſom.)*

SIR G. Mr. Delaval?

DEL. My brother!

SIR G. *(Falls on his neck)* Can it be? My friend!

DEL. This ſtubborn temper—always in extremes! The tiger, or the child.

SIR G. Oh no! 'Twas not to be forgiven! Beſt of men!

DEL.

DEL. Well, well: we are friends.

SIR G. Everlaſtingly! Brothers!

DEL. Yes; brothers.

SCENE V. *Enter* WILLIAMS *in great haſte.*

WILL. Sir!

DEL. How now?

WILL. I beg your pardon, but Lady Jane and your ſiſter are below. They inſiſt on coming up, and the ſervants are afraid to—

SIR G. Maria! Let us fly! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI. *The apartments of* LORD VIBRATE.

LADY VIBRATE *and the* DOCTOR.

DR. Ya, my coot laty; dat vas every vordt ſo true as vat I ſay. I vas diſcober it vas a vomans; und Sair Shorge, und my Laty Shane, und de vaiting vomans vas diſcober to me all as vat I ſay more.

LADY V. Ay, ay! That was the reaſon Sir George was not at the maſquerade.

DR. Ya, my coot laty.

LADY V. I obſerved he was in a ſtrange moody humour.

DR. My Lordt Fiprate vas fery moſh amazement, ven I vas make him diſcober all as vat I vas make diſcober mit my coot laty.

LADY V. Sir George has behaved very improperly.

SCENE VII. *Enter* LORD VIBRATE.

LORD V. So, ſo, ſo! All I foreboded has come to paſs! The day is ſlipped away, a new one is

here, and every poſſibility of recovering the eſtate is gone!

LADY V. Ha, ha, ha!

LORD V. Do you laugh?

LADY V. Ha, ha, ha! I do, indeed!

LORD V. Is your daughter's loſs the ſubject of your mirth?

LADY V. Ha, ha, ha! No, no; not her loſs, but your poſitive determination to prove I did not know you! Ha, ha, ha! When I told you that even that motive would not be ſtrong enough, how you ſtormed! "But it will, my lady! But it won't, my lord! I ſay it will, my lady! I ſay it won't, my lord!" Ha, ha, ha! Will you believe that I know you now?

LORD V. What ſhall I do? Adviſe me, Doctor.

DR. I vas adfice, my coot Lordt, dat you ſhall do efery ting as vat you pleaſe.

LADY V. Ay, think: aſk advice. Ha, ha, ha! Now that you can do nothing, the enquiry will be very amuſing.

SCENE VIII. *Enter* THOMPSON.

LORD V. Well, Thompſon, what ſays Counſellor Demur? Has the time abſolutely elapſed?

THOM. Abſolutely, my lord.

LADY V. How wiſely your lordſhip doubts, before you decide! Hay, Doctor?

THOM. I have good news, nevertheleſs.

LORD V. Good news? Speak! Of what kind?

THOM. The honeſty of the oppoſite party.

LORD V. What, the holder of the land?

THOM. Yes, my lord.

LORD V. Which way? Explain!

THOM.

THOM. He has engaged to Mr. Demur, I being preſent, that, if your lordſhip will only ſhew the legality of your late title, he will reſign the eſtate.

LORD V. Is it poſſible?

LADY V. It cannot be! The laſt purchaſer is in India.

THOM. The laſt purchaſer is dead; and it has deſcended to one whom you, my lord and lady, little ſuſpect to be its poſſeſſor.

LORD V. Who?

LADY V. Who?

THOM. Mr. Delaval.

LADY V. Mr. Delaval!

LORD V. Mr. Delaval reſign it on exhibiting the legality of my title?

THOM. He will, my lord.

LORD V. Did he make no conditions?

THOM. None.

LORD V. What, did he not mention Lady Jane?

THOM. Her name did eſcape his lips; but riſing paſſion, and, if I rightly read his heart, emotions of the moſt delicate ſenſibility immediately cloſed them: as if he would not endure the love he bore her to be profaned by any the ſlighteſt ſemblance of barter and ſale.

LORD V. What do you ſay to that, Lady Vibrate? What do you ſay to that?

LADY V. The proceeding is honorable, I own.

LORD V. Did I not always tell you Mr. Delaval was a man of honor?

LADY V. You tell me, my lord? Why you were going to challenge him yeſterday morning!

LORD V. He is no ſuch weathercock as your favorite, Sir George.

LADY V. You miſtake: Sir George is no favorite of mine. Is he, Doctor?

DR. Dat vas all yuſt as vat you ſay, my coot laty.

LORD V. What, he did not come to make a buffoon of himſelf, for your diverſion, at the maſquerade laſt night! Hay, Doctor?

DR. Dat vas all yuſt as vat you ſay, my coot lordt.

LADY V. His perfidious treatment of Miſs Delaval is unpardonable.

DR. Dat vas pad! Fery pad, inteet!

LORD V. Ay ay! He has plenty of words, but he has no heart.

DR. Dat is pad! Fery pad inteet!

THOM. Pardon me, my lord: Sir George may have committed miſtakes, but to the goodneſs of his heart I am a witneſs.

LADY V. You?

LORD V. How ſo?

THOM. By his benevolence, I was yeſterday relieved from the diſgrace and the horrors of a priſon.

LORD V. Indeed!

LADY V. Which way?

THOM. He paid a debt, which, had I been confined, I never could have diſcharged; and, for this unexpected act of humanity, he would not ſuffer ſo much as my thanks.

LORD V. Did Sir George pay the two hundred and forty pounds, Mr. Thompſon?

THOM. The note, which he pretended to write and ſend by me, was a draft on his banker for three hundred.

LORD V. Why he confirmed all my arguments againſt it; and added twice as many of his own.

DR. Sair Shorge vas alvay make agréable. Dat vas his vay.

LADY V.

LADY V. I own, however, I am ſtill more ſurpriſed at the unexampled generoſity of Mr. Delaval.

SCENE IX. *Enter* WILLIAMS.

LADY V. Where is your maſter, Mr. Williams?

WILL. They are all coming, my lady.

LADY V. Who is coming?

WILL. Mr. Delaval, Lady Jane, Miſs Delaval, and Sir George. There has been ſad work! But it is all over, and they are now ſo happy! Here they are!

SCENE THE LAST. *Enter Mr.* DELAVAL *leading* LADY JANE, *and* SIR GEORGE *with* MARIA, *followed by* LUCY.

LORD V. Mr. Delaval, I have great obligations to you. Thompſon has been telling me of your diſintereſted equity.

DEL. The obligation, my lord, was mine. Your lordſhip well knows that the firſt of obligations is to be juſt.

LORD V. Well, well; but the eſtate you are ſo willing to reſign will ſtill, I hope, be yours.

DEL. Nay, my lord.

LORD V. Dubious as all things are, that is a ſubject on which I proteſt I do not believe I ſhall ever have any doubts. What ſay you, Lady Jane? *(Irony)* But now I have my doubts again.

LADY J. *(Eagerly)* What doubts, my lord?

LORD V. I doubt whether you underſtand me?

LADY J. Would your lordſhip teach me to diſſemble?

LORD V. Um—I doubt whether that would be much for your good.

DEL.

DEL. I hope Lady Vibrate will not oppoſe our union?

LADY V. No, Mr. Delaval. Your laſt generous action has charmed me; and Sir George—

SIR G. Has declined in your good opinion. But you cannot think ſo ill of me as I do of myſelf; and, if ever again I ſhould recover my own ſelf reſpect, I ſhall be indebted for it to this beſt of men, and to this moſt incomparable and affectionate of women!

MAR. My preſent joys are inexpreſſible!

DEL. Which my impetuous indignation threatened, for ever to deſtroy. *(Comes forward)* How dangerous are extremes! Sometimes we doubt, and indeciſion is our bane; at others, hurried away by the ſudden impulſe of paſſion, our courſe is marked with miſery. One man is too compliant: another too intractable. Yet happineſs is the aim of all. Since then all are ſo liable to be miſled, let gentle forbearance, indulgent thoughts, and a mild forgiving ſpirit, be ever held as the ſacred duties of man to man.

[EXEUNT OMNES.

EPILOGUE.

SPOKEN BY MR. QUICK, AND MRS. MATTOCKS.

(As Mr Pope concludes and is preparing to bow to the audience, Mr Quick with some importance comes forward.)

Mr. Q. HOLD, Mr. Pope! Pleaſe to give place to me:
'Tis my part to conclude the comedy.
Hem! Hem! *(Begins a grave and ſtately bow.)*
Mrs. M. *(Eagerly advancing.)* Yours, Mr. Quick? I beg you'll hold your tongue!
All Epilogues of right to me belong.
You teaſe the audience, ſir; and put me out.
Mr. Q. Teaſe? Humph! Permit me, madam, there to doubt.
Mrs. M. Your part is over, now; your *doubts* are ended.
Mr. Q. Would that they were! *(To the audience.)* Say, friends, are you offended?
Or are you pleas'd? Which way do you incline?
The author has his doubts; and I have mine;
Pronounce our doom: relieve us from our pain!
Mrs. M. *(Laughs.)* Look at thoſe diſmal features and refrain.
Mr. Q. Should it be fatal, hear, oh hear, our pleadings!
Grant an arreſt of judgment: ſtay proceedings:
I move the court——
Mrs. M. You move? Stand back! I'll wait no longer.
I tell you once again I am th' Epilogue monger.
(Surveys him and laughs)
Mr. Q. What do you laugh at?
Mrs. M. You! There's reaſon ample!
Mr. Q. *(Retiring.)* I beg, ſirs, you'll not follow her example.

Mrs. M.

Mrs. M. The hypocrite! Well, well, I'm glad he's gone:
For now the *pleadings* will be all my own.
The author hopes I'll advocate his play.
Heaven help the man! What would he have me ſay?
(Recollecting.)
Something about the anxious months he ſpent,
(Pompouſly.)
His garret traverſing his brain intent
On this, and that, and t'other; action, plot,
Wit, humour, paſſion; and the lord knows what!
And tell how difficult it was to write
The charming nonſenſe you have heard to-night!——
Poor fool! When he ſuppos'd his work complete,
He thought he had achiev'd a mighty feat!
Nay he proteſts that earth and heaven he'd move,
Could he but pen what you might well approve.
The man ſpeaks fair; is tolerably civil:
Then, ſince an author's only a poor devil,
Doom him to what will give us all delight;
Make him repeat his follies every night.

THE END.